THE WALL STREET JOURNAL & VINCE FOSTER—*TRB*

AUGUST 16, 1993 · $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Whose Family? Which Values?

ANN HULBERT RUTH SHALIT

Sarajevo's Art Boom . . . Anna Husarska
The Only Sane Health Care Reform . . . Robert Shapiro
My Turn in The South . . . Michael Lewis
Deathless in Seattle . . . Jonathan Raban
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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

No Whites Need Apply?

When I was a kid growing up during the Depression, there were signs in public places and advertisements in the newspapers saying, "No Jews Need Apply," "No Catholics" and "No Colored." After World War II, they disappeared, but recent events connected with choosing a chancellor for the New York City schools raise a question about whether the practices continue even though the signs and advertisements are gone.

Several months ago, I received a letter saying I had been nominated for the job of chancellor. The letter stated that, at some later point in the process, I would have to provide various kinds of documentation. But the only form included with the invitation was a two-page questionnaire about racial and gender identity. I didn't bother to send it in.

When the N.Y.C. Board of Education announced its short list for the job of chancellor, there were three candidates: an African-American, Bernard Gifford, a Hispanic, Waldemar Rojas, and a white man, Gerald Tirozzi. We heard that they were all outstanding people, and whoever was chosen would do an excellent job.

Before the selection could be made, Gifford, who was the frontrunner, withdrew, and Rojas's candidacy faded. That seemed to leave Tirozzi, but the next thing we knew, the board had reopened the competition.

What does that mean? When Tirozzi was on a list with two other candidates, people said that any one of them would be terrific. So why didn't he get the job? Is the result of this search the equivalent of posting a sign saying "No Whites Need Apply" for the job of New York City chancellor? And if so, was it better in the old days when prejudice was out in the open or nowadays when prejudice is hidden?

Before the selection could be made, Gifford, who was the frontrunner, withdrew, and Rojas's candidacy faded. That seemed to leave Tirozzi, but the next thing we knew, the board had reopened the competition.

* * * * *

. . . And Not Too Many Asian-Americans

According to a story that appeared in the *Sacramento Bee* ("A Lesson in Asian Disparity," May 9, 1993), admissions officers from California state colleges and universities have warned Asian-American students that they might have a hard time getting into top California schools—even if they are top students. Admissions officers deny that there are ethnic quotas, and they talk about "well-rounded" classes and students. However, their bottom line seems to be that there are too many Asian-Americans qualifying, and, as one admissions officer put it, "the university has a responsibility to provide access to all sectors of the people of California." In other words, they had better save some room for lower-achieving students who are not Asian-American. So Asian-American students are being encouraged to cultivate non-academic interests—and apply to less prestigious schools.

The standard operating here is terribly unfair to the youngsters who have worked hard and played by the rules, only to find that the rules don't count for them. We've fought many battles in this country to make what a person can do the deciding factor in getting into college or getting a job instead of whether the person is white, brown, black or yellow. That's one of the basic tenets of the Civil Rights movement, and the California admissions policy is a big step in the wrong direction.

It's also counterproductive from an educational point of view. We need to raise the achievement of our students so it is comparable to that of students in other industrialized nations. Yet colleges and universities in California—and elsewhere—turn down excellent students because they don't want too many of one race or ethnic group. What kind of message does that send to our students?

Other countries make sure their youngsters know that achievement in the intellectual arena requires the same kind of hard work and devotion as becoming a top tennis player or skier. They make sure students know that their job is to study and learn. And they reward achievement: Youngsters who meet high academic standards get into college or, if they are going right from school to work, they get top jobs with top companies.

Our kids get a mixed message. On the one hand, we say that working hard and achieving in school are important. On the other hand, youngsters can see they don't need to work hard and achieve to get into most colleges; they will be able to find a college to accept them no matter how little they know. And kids can see that hard work and achievement may not be rewarded by getting into a top school anyway. They may still be passed over—like these Asian-American students. No wonder most of our youngsters take it easy.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1993 by Albert Shanker.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

AUGUST 16, 1993

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,100

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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 209, Number 7, Issue 4,100, August 16, 1993. (Printed in the U.S. on July 28, 1993.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 4 & 11, July 19 & 26, Aug. 23 & 30, and Sept. 20 & 27, 1993) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic/National Review joint advertising (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling).

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(ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: TNR@aol.com. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(In some sense) insoluble

To the editors:

An odd thing happened when I was reading your bid to generate millennial enthusiasm for hypercubes ("The Newer Paradigm" by Jim Holt, July 12). Pop! I disappeared from my garden in a puff of bafflement and reappeared some time later at my word processor. I know bizarre things like that can happen because I read all about them in THE NEW REPUBLIC.

While I was gone, I happened to visit the late nineteenth century. There I saw for myself the surge of interest in the crankiest forms of spiritualism as the end of that century approached. I also saw all those fascinating speculations about the fourth dimension, and the many kinky attempts to tie the two together. Face it: you were scooped by a hundred years. *N* out ten.

This "plea for higher dimensions" was tried as a millennial rallying cry back then and fell, if you will excuse a two-dimensional expression, flat. Don't you think that a different idea would be a better bet for a different century? A few suggestions from the same logico-mathematical stable of wonderful obscurities: infinity (can't get enough of it); self-reference (I would say that, wouldn't I); or chaos theory (perhaps too obvious).

ANTHONY GOTTLIEB
London, England

To the editors:

Jim Holt's piece is a gallant, but ultimately self-defeating, attempt to deal with innately difficult technical ideas in a general interest publication. As a mathematician, I suppose I should be grateful for any attempt to acquaint the larger public with some of the fundamental ideas of my field and to give some account of the intellectual gymnastics involved. Holt does, to his credit, succeed in recounting some interesting little snippets of intellectual history and in giving his readers some clue as to how their intuition might be stretched to encompass such ideas as "a three-dimensional sphere" (in four-dimensional space).

Nonetheless, Holt's whimsy doesn't work all that well on the whole and, in fact, goes right over the edge into New Age mystery-mongering. Higher-dimensionality is such an everyday notion in mathematics, or in any subject, from physics to economics, that draws seriously on mathematical ideas, that it's hardly appropriate to be portentous about it, even when that portentousness is cloaked in a light-hearted style. "Higher dimensionality" is intrinsic to all sorts of precise thinking about all sorts of problems and has been for hundreds of years. If, for instance, you want to consider the classical problem of how three "planets" will move in three-dimensional space under Newton's Laws, you are, in reality, obliged to consider what's happening in an eighteen-dimensional "phase-space." That's why the so-called "three-body problem" has been so pesky for 300 years and is (in some sense) genuinely insoluble. If you want to think seriously about quantum mechanics, on the other hand, you have to deal with a mathematical construct called "Hilbert space," which is *infinite* dimensional.

Holt seems to endow higher-dimensional geometry with an aura of solemn mystery. However, from the point of view of many professional mathematicians it's actually easier to think about high-dimensional space than to deal with "ordinary" three-dimensional space. Certain problems involving spaces modeled on three-dimensional space—the technical term is "three-dimensional manifolds"—are incredibly intractable. The analogous problems for higher-dimensional manifolds (five dimensions or more, to be precise) are, by contrast, "easy." This seems paradoxical to the novice, but serious mathematicians quickly come to understand that it represents simple common sense.

I must also insist that some of Holt's anecdotal evidence for "the Fourth Dimension" be seriously questioned. The story concerning Gottfried Plattner's mysterious disappearance and reappearance with reversed chirality is, indeed, fascinating. But what is the documentary evidence? Even more to the point, may we assume that the restored Mr. Plattner (or anti-Plattner) starved to death within weeks of his reappearance? Any complete left-right reversal of his material substance would, perforce, have affected him on the molecular level as well, leaving him unable to metabolize common nutrients!

Even more doubt-provoking is the anecdote concerning the "tesseract" house in Los Angeles. Those of us who misspent our youth devouring science fiction by the ton will instantly recognize this account of a so-called "disquieting episode" as the synopsis of a well-known, much-anthologized short story, "And He Built a Crooked House," by the old master Robert A. Heinlein.

In summation, I must insist on the truth of some ancient clichés. A little learning *is* a dangerous thing. There *isn't* any royal road to mathematics. Readers who aspire to genuine understanding of the ideas Holt flirts with are invited to eschew glib paraphrases and to study mathematics seriously, a project involving great patience and considerable hard work, but incomparably rewarding when done thoroughly.

NORMAN LEVITT
Department of Mathematics
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

To the editors:

When dealing with sensitive matters like the fourth dimension, national purposes and Hillary Clinton, it is important to get the facts straight. Jim Holt says Quintus Teal was never heard from after the collapse of his tesseract house into the fourth dimension. But in fact Teal and his party were eventually found wandering in Joshua Tree National Forest. It was the house that was never seen again.

So much, at any rate, is well known. What only a few realize is that after this intriguing disaster, Teal went on to design (under a different name, of course) the Los Angeles freeway system, which works perfectly in four dimensions.

CHARLES RUBIN
Forest Hills, Pennsylvania

Loan facts

To the editors:

In his article "Sallie Maen't" (July 12), Eric Konigsberg made inaccurate statements about Sallie Mae. First, he says the corporation is "federally insured against insolvency." In fact, there is no federal backstop against our insolvency; there is no federal insurance or guarantee on our debt. He states: "Last year Sallie Mae raked in $394 million in profits, making it one of the 100 largest corporations in the United States." That $394 million in 1992 earnings equates to a 6 percent return on the $6.5 billion in market capitalization at year end, scarcely rakish results. While the corporation ranks as the thirty-seventh largest U.S. corporation (*Forbes*), based on our $47 billion in year-end 1992 assets, last year's $394 million in earnings ranked us No. 120 (also *Forbes*) among U.S. companies. The $2 million and $1.7 million in compensation cited for our top two officers also missed the mark. Their actual compensation was $1.1 million and $900,000, more than half of which in each case was performance based, not salary.

Although Konigsberg asserted that "the campaign to kill the bill is a case study in the way big dollar Washington lobbyists can gut a sensible reform," he summarily presented just one side of this issue. We and many others, including the Congressional Research Service, disagree with the claims of the bill's propo-

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nents that a direct federal lending program would be cheaper than the current guaranteed student loan program. We have also made suggestions for how real dollars could be saved out of the existing program, proposals that would diminish the profitability of student lending for us and other participants in the program.

BETH VAN HOUTEN
Vice President, Communications and Investor Relations, Sallie Mae
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

In Eric Konigsberg's piece on Sallie Mae, he observes that Sallie Mae and its allies have hired, among others, Patton, Boggs & Blow, the "once and future home to Vernon Jordan." The last time I checked, Mr. Jordan was one of my partners at Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld. He has no previous affiliation with Patton, Boggs, and, to my knowledge, has not expressed any interest in leaving Akin, Gump. Surely, Konigsberg's reference was to Ron Brown, secretary of commerce and a former Patton, Boggs partner. Is it too much to ask that TNR keep straight the handful of prominent black public figures who are formally and informally advising the Clinton administration?

JORGE LOPEZ JR.
Kensington, Maryland

Eric Konigsberg replies:

Because all of Sallie Mae's assets—student loans—are backed by the federal government, my assertion that the agency is federally insured against insolvency is accurate. As for the compensation of Sallie Mae's two top executives, the $2 million and $1.7 million are in fact the 1991 figures reported by the General Accounting Office, as I stated. The 1992 figures, just out, were listed by the GAO as $1.7 million for Lawrence Hough, Sallie Mae's president, and $1.4 million for Vice President Albert Lord Jr.

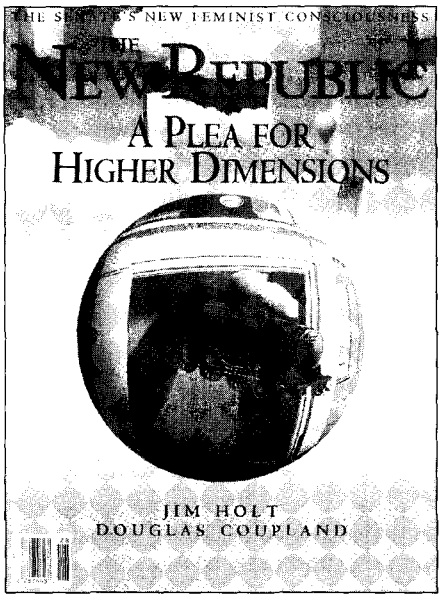
All-consuming

To the editors:

Harold Brodkey's text "To My Readers" in the recent *New Yorker* captured my interest. His all-consuming fear and anger, rage and impotence were familiar to me as a fellow sufferer of a chronic illness. Sufferers of chronic illness are all too often expected by society, friends, neighbors, even our family to silently endure our situation; unless, of course, we are media-created heroes like Magic Johnson who are cheerful, respectful and hopeful, who become soothing role models for society, teaching that illness need not cause one to feel badly, or reflective or afraid.

Magic, we may argue, is cheerful, etc., because he has the money and the influence to gain access to the best treatment, reap the benefits of the latest research, live in as much comfort as money can buy the chronically ill and die a hero. Yet Magic, at least the public Magic, is someplace even we "regular people" who suffer from chronic illness either are, have been or will be in time. That someplace is denial.

The "quite severe rage and a vast, truly extensive terror" felt by Brodkey, his contempt for us "and for life and everything"—indeed, his denial as well as Richard Howard's observation of Brodkey's "rage of a self-proclaiming '*ressentiment*'"—are all part of "the process," part of life. Therefore, I disagree with



Howard's conclusion ("Almost Classic," July 12) that "there is a pornography of self-disclosure here that ... crosses the line of what is to be silently endured." He seems rather to prefer the martyrdom of the "millions of others who are suffering from this plague in silence, in dignity, in despair."

Brodkey does rail in public, in quite an unbecoming manner, as Howard implies. But who is to say what is considered railing, other than the person who is ill? What we all seek, ill or not, is "wellness," and for each of us that vague and inexact term is totally and only subjective.

Brodkey has indeed sought and gained publicity, but he is not the only chronically ill person to have been overwhelmed in "the process" to "wellness." Many of us have railed just as selfishly, manipulated just as "hucksterishly" and been just as inappropriately celebratory in the realm of our own public. Many of us have chosen to be silent and endure our despair. Many of us die without ever sanctioning our own illness.

My point is simply that each of us, ill or not, has a right to pursue "the process," to pursue life, even, or especially, in the face of death, in any way we choose to be appropriate. I believe that Howard's dismissal of Brodkey's "pornography of self-disclosure" will prove to be as meaningless and futile as Brodkey's statement that he will "not be out talking and looking for medicines and diets."

COLETTE CLARKE TORRES
Austin, Texas

To the editors:

Harold Brodkey's announcement shows what a wide shadow the AIDS epidemic has cast over our cultural life. Richard Howard's article on Brodkey shows how chilling that shadow is: Henceforth artists are to be instructed on how to express their suffering.

PHILIP WEISS
New York, New York

Evolutionary impact

To the editors:

Mickey Kaus is right to object to Supreme Court nominee Ruth Bader Ginsburg's view on the constitutionality of legalized abortion (TRB, "Moderate Threat," July 12), but he doesn't quite reach the crux of the argument. To recap, Judge Ginsburg is winning widespread praise for her criticism of *Roe* v. *Wade*'s reliance on the unenumerated "right to privacy," and for her alternate suggestion that legalized abortion could be more firmly justified by the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. She argues that anti-abortion laws are sexually discriminatory because they only impact a person with a uterus. Seldom mentioned, though, is that Ginsburg's logic would also require the legalization of rape, since our current laws against forcible insertion of the penis only impact a person with a penis.

It is unfortunate that our mammalian biology evolved long before our current theories of equality, but Supreme Court decisions, no matter how imaginative, won't do anything to change that fact.

STEVE SAILER
Chicago, Illinois

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Who killed Vincent Foster?

I have no real evidence that deputy White House counsel Vincent Foster was driven to suicide by a series of viciously unfair and hypocritical editorials in *The Wall Street Journal.* In fact, I don't even really believe it. But it would be easy enough to make the case, if one were willing to use against the *Journal* the same techniques of innuendo and demagogy that the *Journal* editorials used against Foster and his colleagues in recent weeks.

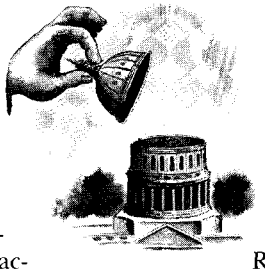
As it is, these editorials stand as a case study in editorial dishonesty. If they had appeared in, say, the Moonie-owned *Washington Times,* they could be shrugged off. But *The Wall Street Journal* is one of America's most respectable and, in its news pages, best newspapers. When its editorial writers sink so low—as they have sunk repeatedly in their hysterical response to the election of a Democratic president—it's worthy of note.

The *Journal*'s basic theme was that Foster and three other alumni of Arkansas's Rose Law Firm, including Hillary Clinton, formed some sort of sinister cabal within the Clinton administration. A subtheme was that this cabal was—is—engaged in a secret plot to subvert democracy by misusing the powers of the White House.

Keep in mind a couple of things. First, it is hardly surprising or suggestive of anything nasty that the governor of Arkansas, elected president, would bring four people from the state's leading law firm into his administration. In 1981 Ronald Reagan, with a far larger California legal establishment to choose from, gave four top administration jobs to partners in the Los Angeles firm of Gibson Dunn & Crutcher (where—full disclosure—I once worked). *The Wall Street Journal* didn't find anything suspicious about this.

Second, throughout the 1980s the *Journal* editorial page was the nation's loudest troubadour of untrammeled executive power. Most memorably, it defended with righteous thunderbolts the Reagan administration's alleged constitutional privilege to conduct a secret war in Nicaragua and lie about it, all in violation of explicit laws passed by Congress and signed by the president.

Yet there was the *Journal*—in a June 17 editorial titled "Who Is Vincent Foster?"—declaring that what is "most disturbing" about the Clinton administration is "its carelessness about following the law." Two examples were offered. The first involved a federal judge's accusation that the administration had "dillydallied" about preserving White House computer tapes. This from the newspaper that applauded Ollie North for his famous "shredding party" of Iran-contra documents. In the present case, there was no question of a cover-up: the tapes were from previous administrations. And the editorialists even conceded that they found the judge's order "more than a little presumptuous." But that didn't stop them from suggesting skullduggery.



Their second alleged concern was whether private meetings of Hillary Clinton's health care task force violated something called the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The editors expressed in passing their characteristically overheated view that this law is an unconstitutional intrusion on executive power. But, far from inviting Mrs. Clinton therefore to flout it, they declared that "a basic test of [an administration's] character and mores" is "how scrupulously it follows the law" and went on to sneer that "constitutional law may not have been the big part of the Rose firm's practice."

None of this had anything directly to do with Vincent Foster. The editorial's title—"Who Is Vincent Foster?"—referred to the White House's hesitation to supply a photograph to illustrate the predictable vilification. This, the paper implied, was all part of the administration's secret plot to ... what? Well, not clear. But something bad. An ungracious note the next day conceded that a White House fax reporting a photo on the way had arrived before deadline time but "didn't promptly come to the attention of the responsible editors."

"Vincent Foster's Victory" (June 24) dealt with the troubling development that a federal appeals court had upheld Mrs. Clinton's right under FACA to hold her task force meetings in private. Far from apologizing for the earlier accusation that Mrs. Clinton—in cahoots with her Rose Firm "cronies"—had done something improper, the editorial ironically congratulated Foster as a "movement conservative" for successfully defending executive power.

With barely a pause for breath, though, it then went on to accuse "the Clintonites, as is their wont," of allowing "hubris to smother mere principle" because "they went secret over changing the entire American health care system." Since, unlike the contra war in Nicaragua, health care reform will not be imposed without congressional approval, it's a little hard to comprehend the *Journal*'s assertion that "even defenders of executive authority ... blanch at such imperial overstretch."

"Who Is William Kennedy III?" (July 7) dealt with the official White House report on the travel office scandal. Compared, once again, with the Reagan-Bush years, this was a remarkably frank self-investigation of a fairly trivial episode. But that's not how the *Journal* saw it. The editorial began by ludicrously suggesting a cover-up. The report "would have you believe that William Kennedy III is just one of four White House aides" involved in the episode. "In fact," the editors revealed breathlessly, he "is former managing partner of Little Rock's Rose Law Firm." Dum de dum dum!

And so what? Well, Kennedy's role in travelgate "seems part of a law enforcement pattern centering on the Rose clique" (a.k.a. "the Rose firm's four-partner implant in the administration"). For example, said the editors, Vincent Foster "cut some legal corners"—unspecified—in the FACA case (though of course he turned out to be right). Furthermore, the Rose firm represented an Arkansas financial firm that once many years ago was involved in a deal with BCCI. No suggestion that the Stephens firm—let alone Rose, let alone Kennedy or Foster, let alone Bill or Hillary Clinton—had done anything wrong. Nevertheless, "the early indications of the Rose view of the law are certainly disconcerting, displaying a lot of cornercutting and casual abuse of power."

The only shred of justification for this sweeping claim is that William Kennedy was the one who called in the FBI to investigate travel office improprieties without going through Attorney General Janet Reno. That was certainly a mistake. But, in this and future editorials, the *Journal* subtly shifts to the implication that there was something nefarious about investigating the travel office

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 16, 1993

CROWN DEPTHS

In Crown Heights again, in New York again, in a hot and dank August again, there are scandals. With the release, by Richard Girgenti, the state director of criminal justice, of the "Report to the Governor on the Disturbances in Crown Heights," the spectacle of professional and political delinquency is extraordinary: an aloof and somewhat precious mayor who held himself above and away from the ugliness, and who continues to make weakness look like goodness' twin; a police commissioner, now the drug czar in the nation's capital, whose incompetence in protecting people and property during the riot was so great that it can only be explained by a personal indifference to their fate; political handlers and counselors who kept their knowledge of criminal acts to themselves; police officers who bungled the arrest of a murderer so badly that the murderer went free; public prosecutors who failed to secure the conviction of a man who killed another man solely for reasons of racial hatred, whose pocket held the knife that was proved to have killed the victim and whose clothes were stained with the victim's blood; a judge whose injudiciousness on the bench robbed a jury of all empirical and conceptual clarity; and jurors (eleven out of twelve) who proceeded to drink and to dine with the plainly guilty man the day after they acquitted him.

About all these scandals, the Girgenti Report is damning and the papers are full. But the report and the reporters are a little misleading. The conduct of the mayor and the police was interesting and repugnant, but not as interesting and as repugnant as the behavior of the vigilantes and the crowds. And the fate of David Dinkins exercises us rather less than the fate of Yankel Rosenbaum. The real scandal of Crown Heights is Crown Heights. Not merely on August 19, 20, 21 and 22, 1991, but in the months and years before and in the months and years after. This is a neighborhood in which difference is not tolerated, prejudice is taken for truth, crime is described as political expression, violence is accepted as a legitimate response to personal and social unhappiness and failure is construed as victimization. When you hit Eastern Parkway, it seems, you hit a boundary of civilization. The outrage of this neighborhood is the neighborhood itself.

On the neighborhood, however, the Girgenti Report, two volumes and all, is oddly incomplete. Indeed, it contributes to the evasiveness that it was charged to dispel. It, too, peddles equivalences. They are not the

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coarsest kind; the distinction between the accidental violent death of Gavin Cato and the purposeful violent death of Yankel Rosenbaum is made. The Girgenti Report's equivalences are established in a more sophisticated way. Its authors deny that certainty about the causes of the events is possible, that the truth about the neighborhood, and therefore about the validity of the grievances that issued in what looks more and more like the first pogrom in American history, may be known. All that may be known about Crown Heights, instead, are "perceptions."

"When you start talking about perception, well if you live around here, perception is all you're left with." These are the words of one Thad Owens, a community organizer in Crown Heights, and the authors of the report are mightily taken with them. (They are the only "pull quote" in the document.) And so they write that "the accident on the evening of August 19, 1991, was the catalyst for a disturbance largely because it epitomized many of the perceptions pre-existing in the black community about the Lubavitchers, the police and the [Hasidic] Hatzoloh ambulance service." To wit, that the Lubavitchers are politically more powerful, that they receive "preferential treatment" from the police, that the Hasidic anti-crime patrol excludes blacks and harasses them. And the Lubavitchers, too, have their own "perceptions," notably that they "view themselves as the minority in the Crown Heights community."

Of all these "perceptions" the report is exquisitely understanding. They are handled in a dodgy anthropological spirit, as the urban equivalent of folk superstitions; they motivate action, and their truth or falsity is beside the point. The blacks of Crown Heights might as well have told the state's investigators that the Jews poisoned the wells, or that the world is flat. "It is beyond the scope of this report to determine whether such assertions are true. However, the perception of preferential treatment is certainly real." This skepticism is an intellectual, and political, abdication of responsibility. It leads to absurd statements like this one: "In *apparent* retaliation for the accident, a 29-year-old Jewish man, Yankel Rosenbaum, was attacked three hours later and subsequently died from stab wounds." (Italics added) Did it occur to the authors of this report that their skepticism about the possibility of truth vitiates their entire enterprise? Of course it did not occur to them. For their skepticism is highly selective. It pertains only to those facts that are politically troublesome, because they would offend the highly inflamed African-American community of New York and shatter the phony peace that this report was designed to establish.

The joke on the Girgenti Report, however, is that the truth shines even through its pages, sometimes through its footnotes. Consider the Lubavitchers' "perception" that they are the minority in Crown Heights. On page 4 of volume 1 we learn that "they make up about ten percent of the population [of Crown Heights]," and on page 49 that "in the area where the majority of Lubavitchers live, they are outnumbered nearly two to one by blacks." So, then, this is not a perception, it is a fact: the Lubavitchers *are* the minority in Crown Heights. Or consider the view of the local blacks that the Hasidic anti-crime patrol excludes and harasses blacks. In 1978, according to the report, the local black community, in an admirable imitation of the Hasidim's efforts at self-reliance and self-protection, established their own "black citizens' patrol." And about this innovation we are told, in a spirit of epilogue, these two lugubrious facts: "Although leaders of both communities pledged their cooperation to integrate the two patrols, their efforts never materialized. The black citizens' patrol soon folded." And then, in an astoundingly short section in volume 1, two paragraphs long, called "Bias-related Incidents," the report tells that the police in the Crown Heights precinct "identified twenty-seven bias-related incidents," that "twenty-one were classified as anti-Semitic, three were classified as anti-black and three were classified as anti-white" and that "these data and the events associated with them clearly support the view that much of the violence and property damage was targeted at persons who were identified as members of the Hasidic community."

So farewell, perceptions. Those observers, Jewish and gentile, black and white, who saw in the events in Crown Heights an anti-Semitic depravity were right. To be sure, the Girgenti Report does not deny that Crown Heights is riddled with prejudice: "At the core of the Crown Heights community is a deep-seated conflict between blacks and Lubavitchers which is imbued with racial prejudice, anti-Semitism and religious intolerance." But let us be clear about what this means. A prejudice is not merely an opinion. It is not merely a bad opinion. It is a *false* opinion. Its concrete consequences, its expression in action, may be controlled or abolished by the law and the police; but a prejudice will not disappear until it is shown to have no basis in reality, until its origins in unreason are exposed. Such an exposure, however, is precisely what the political culture of the contemporary American city is designed to elide.

"Crown Heights is not a typical neighborhood," the Girgenti Report begins. Another mistake. Crown Heights is diabolically typical. There are many neighborhoods in many cities in which races and ethnic groups are colliding roughly, in which leadership is synonymous with demagoguery, in which the truth may not be spoken. Even if the mayor of New York and the police of New York had behaved in an exemplary way during the violence in Crown Heights, a report would still have been begged. After all, "death to the Jews" and "Jews get out of here" and "the Jews killed the kids" (these are all quotations from the Girgenti Report) were shouted, and then acted upon, in American streets. More than a mayoral election in the city of New York is at stake. But a report about the really urgent subject that is broached by Crown Heights would have taken guts, and so it is still begged. •

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NOTEBOOK

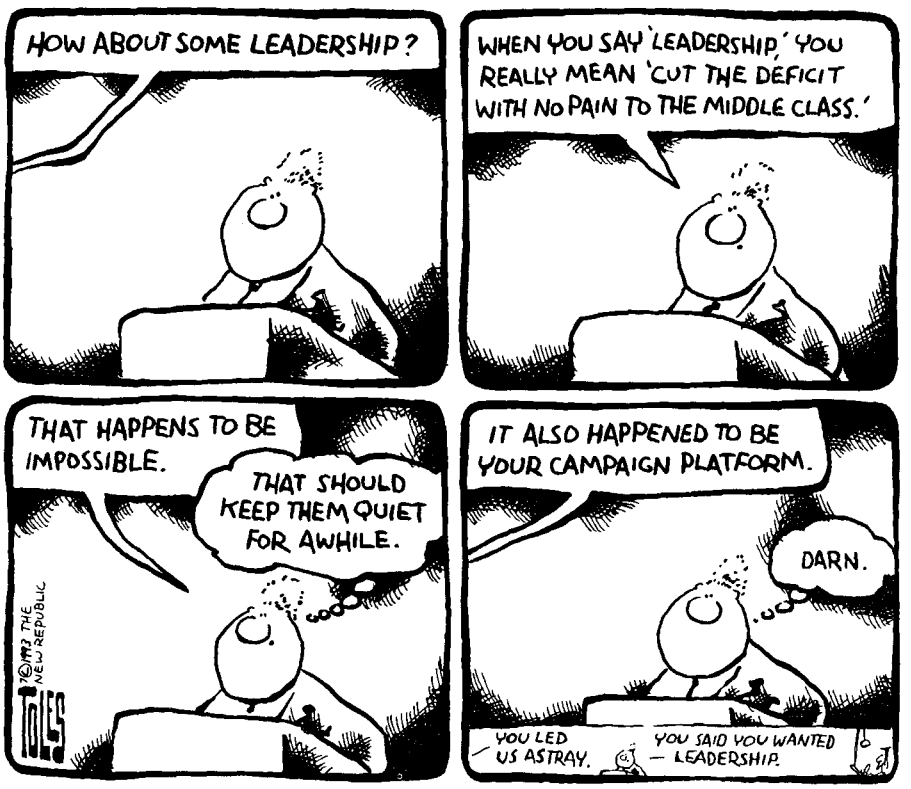
DEPARTMENT OF SELF-PARODY:

Republicans Call for Tax Break for Flood Victims

For Immediate Release
July 21, 1993

NEWS from the Senate Republican Conference
Thad Cochran, Chairman

BIGOT BAR NUNN: Despite rigging his committee hearings to promote his own bigoted views, despite humiliating his own president with a series of stunts designed to appeal to the worst elements in popular culture, despite forcing on the administration a barely defensible compromise, Senator Sam Nunn is still not satisfied. His legislative "codification" of the compromise on gays in the military, attached to a defense authorization bill, is no such thing. It restates in the ugliest terms every discredited argument against the service of gay people; and it provides a legal rationale for any harebrained commander who wishes to enforce the ban in a way he thinks fit. There is no statement that sexual orientation as such bars one from military service; no reference to the commitment to enforce rules on sexual misconduct against gays and straights equally; no restraint on the military's ability to investigate the private lives of its own personnel. And there is even a watering down of the commitment not to ask soldiers about their sexuality upon entrance. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue" becomes, "Ask, If Necessary." Thankfully, the executive branch can enforce the policy as it sees fit and nothing in the law actually nullifies the deal. But the codification marks the first time in history that discrimination against homosexuals in the military will be written into law, and it could drastically affect how the policy is interpreted in the courts and in the ranks. Those who support the compromise now confront the chance that in the future, it will be seen through the prism of Sam Nunn's bigotry rather than that of Bill Clinton's good intentions. Those members of Congress who support the deal and believe in civil rights should filibuster or strike down the amendment; if it passes, the president should find the courage to veto it.


HOW ABOUT SOME LEADERSHIP?
WHEN YOU SAY 'LEADERSHIP,' YOU REALLY MEAN 'CUT THE DEFICIT WITH NO PAIN TO THE MIDDLE CLASS.'
THAT HAPPENS TO BE IMPOSSIBLE.
THAT SHOULD KEEP THEM QUIET FOR AWHILE.
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IT ALSO HAPPENED TO BE YOUR CAMPAIGN PLATFORM.
DARN.
YOU LED US ASTRAY.
YOU SAID YOU WANTED — LEADERSHIP.

WHY BOREN IS REVOLTING: Once again, David Boren is protesting the president's budget. Of course, the bill emerging from conference committee is not much different from the budget Boren voted for, after fulminating against it, after giving it his unreserved support, and so on. But for some reason, a few fellow Democrats still seem to be paying attention to the Oklahoman's posture of the day. They should ignore him, quit temporizing and support their president. As we have pointed out, the compromise budget is far from perfect, but it's all we've got. Clinton's plan remains the first serious effort at deficit reduction in thirteen years. And at this stage in the game, the alternative to $500 billion in deficit reduction through a mixture of tax increases and spending cuts is not $600 billion and fewer tax increases. It's no deficit reduction at all—and the real possibility of economic catastrophe. Democrats, stand up and be counted.

IF I STICK MY TONGUE IN YOUR EAR, WE'LL REALLY CONFUSE THE ETHICS COMMITTEE:

AP/Wide World Photos

Representative Rostenkowski and Senator Packwood confer. •

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Blah, blah, blah

The following is the transcript of a question that Joseph Biden, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, asked Ruth Bader Ginsburg during her Supreme Court confirmation hearings last week.

SENATOR BIDEN: . . . [If] I had to be on an island with a man for any extended period of time, I might pick Judge [Antonin] Scalia. And the reason I would, sincerely, is I think he's brilliant. I think he's dead wrong most of the time, as he thinks I am, and it would be, as another nominee who came before us once said when asked why he wanted to be on the court, he said it would be an intellectual feast.

I now—a slight digression—I had a conversation with Justice Scalia after he had been nominated to tell him that I was about to say in an interview the vote I most regretted casting out of all the ones I ever cast was voting for him because he was so effective. He said, "What are you doing now?" And I thought he was asking me about something—I said, "I'm teaching a course in constitutional law at Widener University." He said, "Oh, my God. I better come and tell them the truth." So I'm sure he would have an opportunity to educate me if we were on an island together.

But having said that, Justice Scalia, on a very serious note, has offered one method—one method of—a methodology to determine whether or not a right of privacy, a personal right that is not enumerated, not mentioned in the Constitution, warrants constitutional protection. And he has written that the only interests protected by the liberty clause of the Fourteenth Amendment are those interests which are defined in the most narrow and specific terms where historical safeguards from government interference [have] existed.

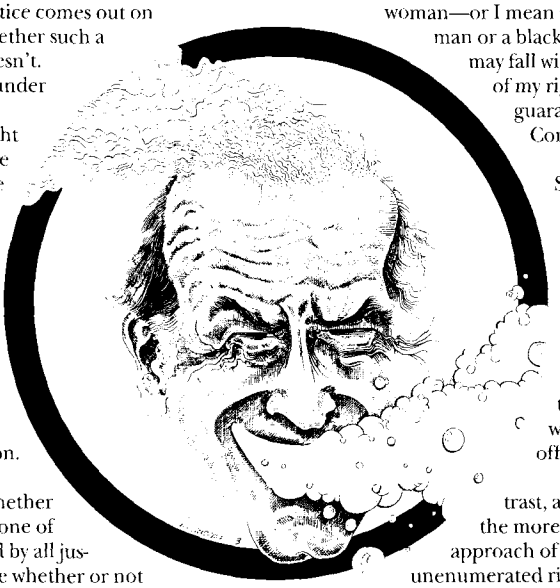
Now, as you know better than I do—again at the expense of offending my brethren in the press, I'm going to be very fundamental about this, to use a phrase from another—in another context—when in the past we have determined whether or not fundamental rights of privacy exist, one of the things they go back and do—courts have done is go back and look at history. They say what have we done in the past as a people? What has our country done? What has our English jurisprudential system recognized, not only here in the states but in England in the common law? And they looked back at that as one of the guideposts—not the only one, not necessarily determinative, but that's what they do—they have done.

And I think, by inference, Justice Scalia acknowledges that is an appropriate method, at least a starting point, to determine whether or not an unenumerated right should be recognized as protected by the Constitution. And so Justice Scalia says that when you go back to determining whether or not there is a—there's an interest protected by the liberty clause of the Fourteenth Amendment—you go back and look at those interests defined in their most narrow and specific terms when you look back at history.

So the question for Justice Scalia in deciding whether the Constitution protects a particular liberty, including a particular privacy interest, is whether years and years ago the government recognized that precise, specific interest. Now, that approach of Justice Scalia, which was outlined by him in the Michael H. case, that approach is very different from another, and I would characterize as the traditional approach for determining whether or not these unenumerated rights that we have recognized exist, an approach which—the traditional approach, in my view, looks to whether the Constitution expresses a commitment to a more general interest and then asks how that commitment should be applied in our time [to] a specific situation.

The difference between these two approaches can make all the difference in the world where a justice comes out on the finding of whether such a right exists or doesn't.

For example, under Justice Scalia's approach, the right to marry someone of a different race is not protected by the Constitution—at least arguably, based on things he has said, because the right to marry is nowhere specifically mentioned in the Constitution. And when you go back to look at whether or not—which is one of the methods used by all justices to determine whether or not there is an unenumerated right that should be protected—when you go back in history and look, there's no place you can say that under our English jurisprudential system, our courts or the English courts, have traditionally recognized the specific right of blacks and whites to marry. And since you can't find that back there, then the right doesn't exist.



Whereas, in footnote 6, for example, as you well know, although Justices Kennedy and Souter—I mean Kennedy and O'Connor—agreed with the overall finding on that case, which I won't bother you with the facts, which you know well and are not particularly relevant to my point—they said we dissent from the methodology used by Justice Scalia in arriving at a decision which is the right decision—my words—but for the wrong reason. And they said you go back and you look at the general proposition of whether or not the general interest seeking protection under the Constitution is in fact one we've historically protected. So they say when you go back, you should look at have we historically protected the right and recognized the right of individuals to marry who they want to marry? So you go back and, depending on what question you ask, you get a different answer.

And if you go back and say okay, we'll recognize—and I'm oversimplifying—if we recognize we're going to recognize—determine whether or not anti-miscegenation laws are constitutional, and the basis on which they're being challenged is I have a privacy right to marry who I want to marry; so let's see if that right is protected by the Constitution.

Scalia's approach, you go back, you look at all the history and you say, hey, there's no place where blacks and whites were protected—because that's the issue—are blacks and whites—can they marry? But if you use the O'Connor approach you go back and say have we recognized the right to marry? And they say yeah, we've done that; ergo we can say, using that methodology of looking at the general proposition, there may be a rationale to acknowledge—a principled rationale to acknowledge or recognize the right to marry a black man or a white woman or a white woman—or I mean a black white man or a black woman. That may fall within the domain of my right of privacy guaranteed by the Constitution.

[At this point, Senator Biden was asked a question by Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah. After a ninety-nine word response, the Delaware senator picked up where he left off.]

Now, in contrast, as I said, under the more traditional approach of recognizing unenumerated rights, the courts asked not whether the legal system historically had protected interracial marriages but whether the legal system historically had protected the institution of marriage generally.

Because it had, because our legal system long had understood the importance of family integrity and independence, the court held in *Loving* v. *Virginia* that the particular right to marry someone of another race is also protected.

Now, in thinking about how the Constitution protects unenumerated rights, including rights of privacy, will you use—I'm not asking you where you're going to come out on any issue, but will you use the methodology that looks to—going back to a specific right being sought guaranteed, or will you use the more traditional method of more broadly looking at the right that is attempting—seeking constitutional protection before the court? What methodology will you use? What role will history and tradition play for you in determining whether or not a right exists that is not enumerated?

JUDGE GINSBURG: Mr. Chairman, if I understand your question correctly . . . you are asking whether I would have subscribed to both parts of *Loving*, that is, both the equal protection and the due process—

SENATOR BIDEN: No. Let me be very clear . . .

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MONTGOMERY POSTCARD

DRIVING MISS ONNIE

By Michael Lewis

One summer evening not long ago, I found myself, somewhat implausibly, driving an elderly black woman away from her home in Mobile, Alabama. It used to be that in any Southern city if you saw a white man driving an older black woman you knew instantly: he's picking up the maid. And so, in a way, I was. The tiny woman in the passenger seat with the enormous purse clasped tightly on her lap was Miss Onnie Lee Logan, an 83-year-old maid who had been, until the state revoked her license in 1984, Alabama's last midwife. We were heading from Mobile to Montgomery, where she was going to see a rehearsal of a play about her life.

In the back sat my friend Katherine Clark, who published an oral history of Miss Onnie (pronounced "Ownee"), from which she crafted a one-woman play called *Motherwit*. The thoughts of a certain kind of white Southerner when he climbs into a car with any kind of elderly black Southerner are one indication that the Old South has not quite died. Even though he has no special stake in the past—no Civil War portrait wall, no known relations in the Daughters of the Confederacy—he is unable to proceed without some measure of self-consciousness. He feels like he's about to test drive his soul. He thinks: please don't let her see through me. Followed by: she seems to like me, so perhaps I am racially enlightened after all. Followed by: what bullshit. He hides his suspicion that, much as he would like to believe otherwise, had he lived in the past he would never have lifted a finger against the status quo.

Miss Onnie was kind enough not to broach the subject, though her life is replete with stories of Klan night rides, murdered family members, castrated men friends and society's successful conspiracy to preserve her illiteracy. Instead she wanted to talk about how good most white Southerners had been to her. Probably the best way to illustrate the woman's implausibility is to quote at length her words from the end of her oral history:

> Whatever I've done, I've done as well as I could and beyond. If I had went on I believe I would've been no mo' successful bein' a registered nurse or a doctor. I've had several people tell me that you should've been, you should've been a doctor. I cain't say I wished I had done that because I'd be neglectin' the blessin' that God give me if I say that. I believe God pulled out all of his blessin's on me and I appreciate 'em and put 'em to good work. So I'm satisfied at what I've done. I'm satisfied at what has happened in my life. The only thing I wished I had've had was mo' general education.But not anyway that I would've been a real rich doctor or a great big high nurse. Although I didn't get that I'm satisfied. Perfectly satisfied at what my life has done for me. I was a good midwife. One of the best as they say. This book was the last thing I had planned to do until God said well done. I consider myself—in fact if I leave tomorrow—I've lived my life and I've lived it well.

It was immediately clear that Miss Onnie's existence posed a problem for modern sensibilities. For a start, a black woman who had suffered the full indignity of pre-civil rights Alabama yet does not see herself as a victim threatens those who do. A professor at Harvard who read her oral history wrote to say that either the historian was making up stories or the subject was lying, because there was no way that a black woman could have lived in rural Alabama for most of this century and remained as evidently joyful, triumphant—a little egotistical even—and free of bitterness as Miss Onnie. She insulated herself so well from larger social forces that there is now almost no political use to which her life might not be put. For an unreconstructed Southerner, she might well represent another belated argument for segregation—after all, since she turned out so happy, maybe others would too.

Coming up on midnight, we approached Montgomery. The city is a classic Southern Greek McNugget—a few doric temples surrounded by miles of motels and fast food joints. But in downtown Montgomery you can't turn a corner without passing someplace sacred to the civil rights movement. The idea of taking the shards of racial injustice and turning them into a quaint history village, a pious Williamsburg, has been floated, most recently, by Morris Dees, the famous civil rights lawyer who lives here. Miss Onnie showed little interest in the subject; I assumed she figured that there wasn't much point in visiting civil rights memorials and museums when you are one yourself.

Her life story was read before an audience of seventy the next evening, a couple of blocks from Martin Luther King's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church and across the street from a rent-to-buy engagement ring outlet called Rent-a-Rock. The actress, Tonea Stewart, asked that Miss Onnie not sit in the first row, so Miss Onnie sat in the second row, front and center. But of course no one would sit in front of her. So actress and subject faced each other throughout the performance, and subject watched with keen anticipation, as if not quite sure what was coming next. Soon the actress was telling us how her (that is, Miss Onnie's) beloved mother died when she was a little girl. She was "struck by a stroke," and the white doctor couldn't be bothered to put down his breakfast to tend to her. She lived just long enough to give Onnie instructions for life. The actress tilted her head as she began to recite these. Onnie tilted her head. The actress put a hand to the right side of her glasses. Onnie put her hand to the right side of her glasses. The actress sniffled; Onnie sniffled. The actress dried her tears with a white handkerchief, and so did Onnie. At this point most of the men in the room put their chins on their throats and donned the mask of the

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Southern stoic, while several of the ladies assumed one of the Five Laudable Conditions of the Blessed Virgin, as they seem to do when they become emotional in Alabama.

Earlier that day, we had visited the theater in which Miss Onnie's life may be performed next season, an impossibly splendid $25 million pile on the city's outskirts, a mile from the nearest Waffle House. After the tour, we were taken to meet the good people who ran the place. We entered a big office and Miss Onnie was quickly surrounded by white men ... who could think of nothing to say. If the history of awkward silences ever comes to be written, this one deserves a place. The habit of deference to white men was so deeply ingrained in Miss Onnie that she was incapable of playing the role of the visiting celebrity. The habit of polite submission to visiting celebrities left the hosts equally incapable of playing the role of the white men. It was a silent play peopled with characters without lines. Miss Onnie must have sensed her role because she finally leaned forward and said, "You know, I wrote that book 'cause it was the truth. It's the truth, you know." •

Washington's new consensus.

FAMILY-MONGERS

By Ruth Shalit

If you thought "family values" had been buried by George Bush's disastrous campaign, you're not a Washington policy wonk. George Washington University professor Amitai Etzioni and seven other "communitarian" leaders recently issued a twenty-six-page rhetorical call to President Clinton, urging him to "reclaim family values" as a theme for his administration. On July 30, Vice President Al Gore, tasked with leading the president's National Performance Review, will host a conference on "Reinventing Family Policy." Yuppie neocons William Kristol and Jay Lefkowitz, charged with rethinking conservatism for the "Bradley Project on the '90s," believe the "family" holds the key to GOP success. But the Aspen Institute may offer the strongest proof of where Washington's new center lies. The topic of their recent Domestic Strategy Group? "Children and Families." The moderator? David Gergen.

The bipartisan convergence on the family will likely result in more spin than substance. New Democrats hope to weave family issues into a seamless web of social reform that includes the intractable—and politically divisive—issue of the urban underclass. So far, though, they have seemed more interested in middle-class anxiety than underclass collapse. And conservatives, desperate to win back the yuppie wanderers who abandoned them last November, appear eager merely to pander to suburban angst.

Clinton's family make-over began last year at the Democratic convention, where he and Gore accepted the nomination surrounded by their adoring children. "Government doesn't raise children," Clinton said in his acceptance speech. "People do." Clinton's campaign tract, *Putting People First*, cribbed a line (and a title) from the 1990 monograph "Putting Children First: A Progressive Family Policy for the '90s," published by the centrist Progressive Policy Institute: "The best anti-poverty policy ... is a stable, intact family."

A year later the authors of the PPI monograph, William Galston and Elaine Kamarck, are in second-tier White House jobs (Galston is assistant to the president for domestic policy; Kamarck is an aide to Gore). "There's now a vital and energized center on issues of family policy," says Galston. "We have the makings of a broad consensus."

Bolstered by research into the harmful social and cultural effects of family disintegration, they argue that government policy and social mores ought to reflect the view that children are best off in two-parent families. Demographic changes give political salience to a theme once thought too politically risky for Democrats to broach. A majority of baby boomers—roughly 45 million—are now parents themselves. According to a poll conducted last year by Daniel Yankelovich, most of this generation sees the breakdown of the family at the heart of our social problems. "The baby boomers' quest for self-expression and personal liberation is yielding to values of family," says Will Marshall, president of the PPI. "This is having a major impact on our politics."

Even some liberal Democrats are joining the crusade. "This problem of family disruption in our society is a real thing," says David Blankenhorn of the Institute for American Values in New York. To combat these problems, Blankenhorn and his colleague Barbara Whitehead have joined Galston, Kamarck and communitarians such as Etzioni in calling for federal day care and family-leave policies, an increase in the standard income-tax deduction for families with children and "braking" mechanisms that require parents contemplating divorce to think again.

Yet divorce rates, which peaked in the '70s and '80s, have actually slowed over the past few years. Today the most obvious instances of family instability and breakdown are in the (mainly black) urban underclass, where the problem is not divorce, but the failure of families to form or remain intact. Two out of three black children and one out of five white children are currently born out of wedlock. Appeals to family-friendly workplaces and quality time can't mitigate the consequences of this kind of social chasm.

But the neo-familists seem unwilling to acknowledge the crucial distinction between the middle class and

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the underclass. "I've resisted the idea that this is really about *them*," says Blankenhorn. "These are things that are happening to all of us." Etzioni says he's worried about the problem of family dissolution, as if all families dissolve in the same way. "We have an interesting new device for that," he says. "Supervows. People will voluntarily make a premarriage contract to indicate that they take their marriage more seriously than the law requires. If one wants counseling, the other agrees. If one partner yells, 'Divorce,' the other says, 'Wait six months.' I hope there comes a day when people go up to each other at cocktail parties and say, 'I have a supervow. Do you have one?'"

Galston and Kamarck also seem unduly focused on bourgeois failure. "While the scarcity of intact families in the ghetto is well known," they write in "Putting Children First," "these problems are not the primary focus of this paper." In fact, they're not the focus of any Galston/Kamarck paper. After detailing a host of specific policy measures in *Mandate for Change* to help meet the needs of middle-class families, the two offer the poorest of the poor only "early family preservation strategies" and the comfort of "scores of state and local programs already in existence."

Indeed, it's not at all clear that the new tide of pro-family sentiment will deliver even the modest policy changes Galston and his New Democrat colleagues envision. Although they successfully fought for expanding the earned income tax credit, aimed specifically at providing relief for the working poor, increasing the standard income tax deduction for all families with children has always been at the top of their agenda. "Our cry was picked up by Bill Clinton, who promised tax relief for working families," says Marshall. "That's one promise we hope he'll keep."

He might not. "Am I still for this? Yes," says a top Clinton domestic policy aide. "Will the macroeconomics of the situation permit it? Probably not. The president did speak about it as a promise delayed rather than denied. That turned out not to be the case."

These divisions within the administration make it difficult for Clinton to present a coherent policy. "How much better would the Joycelyn Elders nomination go down with the electorate if it were coupled with a real crusade to resurrect social sanctions against out-of-wedlock births?" laments a Clinton adviser. "It's not an issue he's made a centerpiece in the White House, because in the end it points to a real fault line in the Democratic coalition. And his wife is on the other side of the debate."

Among the Republicans, the new consensus masks equally troubling rifts. Bleeding-heart conservatives such as Jack Kemp and Bill Bennett want to appeal to yuppies' concern over social breakdown without alienating moderate suburban supporters or hectoring single mothers, à la Dan Quayle. Right-wing theocrats such as Pat Buchanan and the Family Research Council's Gary Bauer want to co-opt the same angst for an onslaught against liberal "lifestyles." Meanwhile, neocon intellectuals such as Kristol and Lefkowitz are trying to elide the conflict completely.

Bauer and Buchanan view "family values" in the Reaganite way: as a chance to assert themselves as the moral guardians of the past, a world of two-parent families and heterosexuality. Not so Kemp and Bennett. They soft-pedal the ideological nature of family values, celebrating "parents rights" issues such as school choice. Once seen as a flaky libertarian crusade, school choice is rising to the top of the family values litany for conservatives who lack the stomach for the culture war. The two are fighting for a California school-choice ballot initiative. Last week Kemp raised $600,000 for the measure. Bennett's already been to California twice. "Kemp and Bennett are trying to help connect the issue of family values with specific, concrete, tangible policy proposals, so that it doesn't look like it's just Republicans forcing morality on people," argues Joel Rosenberg of Empower America, the GOP holding tank from which both Kemp and Bennett are plotting their '96 presidential bids. The group is holding another conference on "School Choice and Families" in Los Angeles on September 24. "That'll be another big media hit," predicts Rosenberg. In case it's not, Bennett stands ready with his "Index of Leading Cultural Indicators," a Perot-style fever chart of declining values.

Meanwhile, Republicans of all spots are mesmerized by the recent New York school board elections, which centered around a controversial multicultural curriculum that included material on homosexuality. "The liberal establishment, corrupting and polluting innocent consciousnesses," moans Terry Jeffries, executive director of Buchanan's American Cause. Conservative organizations swarmed District 24 in Queens, blanketing the houses of 500,000 residents with pamphlets and

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"voters' guides." In the end, more than half of the 130 candidates who identified themselves as "pro-family" won. Conservatives were elated. "There seems to be an emerging consensus on the very basic issue that families matter," says Bauer. "What this shows is that black and Hispanic parents no more want their kids being taught that homosexuality is O.K. than anyone else wants these things being done to them." Bauer is working with others to replicate the Queens victories in other states.

Like the frustrated Democratic activists, Republican family-values aficionados complain of their party leadership's skittishness on the issue. Among official Washington "there's fear and trembling in the presence of family values," says Kristol—a curious statement, given the frenetic activity on both sides of the political divide. But Bauer insists he's had no help from the GOP. "In one of my first meetings with [Republican National Committee Chair] Haley Barbour," he recalls, "I brought up this issue in Queens. And he had no idea what I was talking about. He gave me a quizzical look and said, 'What controversy in Queens?'" (In his defense, Barbour says: "When I was elected chairman, I promised to focus on the issues that would unite all of us. Taxes. The economy.")

Even worse than being cut adrift by the party leadership, Bauer might now be in danger of losing the support of some of his strongest allies. In the August issue of the Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review*, Ralph Reed, the Christian Coalition's executive director, shelved demands for a Buchananite culture war in favor of a more Kemp-like agenda: school choice, welfare reform, an increase in the standard tax deduction for families with children. Abortion and gay rights "are not enough," he writes. "The cluster of pro-family issues must now be expanded to include a majority of voters." Bauer is indignant. "Ralph's trying to be more mainstream," he sighs. "Ralph's got his own demons to wrestle with." He's not the only one. •

Sarajevo's art enclave.

BOOM TOWN

By Anna Husarska

SARAJEVO

There are ample reasons for grief over here—blood-covered sidewalks, bombed-out hospitals, overcrowded cemeteries—yet the only time my eyes got misty was when I met Sadik Beširevič, the general director of Bosnia and Herzegovina Railways. Beširevič received me on a Sunday morning in his spacious office. He went out of his way to make a positive impression: he wore his Sunday best (a sharkskin suit, purple shirt and a red paisley tie), offered coffee and vodka and gave very detailed answers to my questions.

It was painful to hear Beširevič list all the losses that his company has suffered: 200 out of 500 passenger cars destroyed, thirty-five of 200 locomotives wrecked, 800 freight cars missing, twelve railway bridges destroyed. He estimated the total damage at $500 million. He told me about his family, which had been decimated in this war: his two brothers (Muslims) were killed by Serb nationalists—one left a Croat widow, another a Serb widow. His four nephews and brother-in-law also died in the fighting.

But the tale became unbearably pathetic when Beširevič started talking about his plans for Bosnia and Herzegovina Railways: "The new tickets will be ready soon," he boasted. But they will be tickets to pretty much nowhere; of the pre-war 660 miles of track, only six miles are currently in use. "The new uniforms for the rail personnel are being designed, so as to conform with our new image," he enthused. Never mind that there is no fabric to sew *any* kind of clothing in Sarajevo. Beširevič wants the new Bosnian trains to be "as elegant as the Austrian ones, which is necessary since we will be rejoining Europe."

He was particularly proud of the company's redesigned logo and letterhead. "With these we're showing a more European image. We think it's good for the company," he bragged as he unrolled a poster bearing the elegant new image: two interlocked blue and green arrows. On the bottom of the poster were photos of the destroyed railway station in Sarajevo. In the center the message read, "The future is in front of us," and just below it, in smaller letters, a simple appeal: "Support Us!"

"Very international, no?" he said, fishing for a compliment. I nodded energetically and blamed my tears on the cigarette smoke. Expressing any doubt that there is a future in the railway is like telling a child that there is no point in writing to Santa Claus. The truth is, in Sarajevo, whose 380,000 inhabitants are barely surviving, even Beširevič's job is not the most surreal. Think of postmen with no letters to deliver, drivers with no trams to drive, guides with no tourists to lead, librarians whose collections of books have been burned or stored away. Paradoxical as it may sound, the one area of activity that has best preserved a semblance of normality in spite of the war, and against all odds, is culture and the arts.

At studio Trio Dizajn, Dada Duraković (a Muslim) and her husband, Bojan Hadžihalilovič (a Serbo-Jew), who designed the logo and the poster for Beširevič (in exchange for Meals-Ready-to-Eat), have their work interrupted all the time by blackouts: a candle can replace a bulb, but the computer and laser printer need electricity. When the war started they moved the studio from the front room of their apartment—too exposed to snipers—to the kitchen. They cook in the bathroom.

Like Beširevič, Dada and Bojan work to forget about

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the war. Of course, the goodies they receive in exchange come in handy, especially since they share their apartment with half a dozen friends and relatives whose houses have been destroyed. When Dada and Bojan designed new I.D. cards for the Bosnian army and the police, they were presented with oil, sugar, feta cheese and peas. As payment for drawing the covers of the weekly *Dani* (Days), the publishers bring them booze. They received reams of paper for producing a fancy invitation for a book party. (The book: *Mom, I Don't Want To Go To the Basement*, a collection of children's drawings and writings about the war.)

When they designed the package for a new brand of cigarettes, the company offered them 30,000 ciggies. The design is very handsome—a Bosnian coat of arms from 1340 that Dada found in a historical book about Yugoslavia. On the back of the pack is printed a short text. Not about the danger of smoking, but about democracy: a quote from the 1910 Bosnian constitution saying, "All citizens are equal before the law." When I mentioned the "surgeon general's warning," Bojan joked that in Sarajevo it would be more fitting to print a different warning: *Pazi Snajper*—Beware of Snipers. "The new brand of cigarettes will be called 'Bosnae,'" Dada said, but the others in the room corrected her: "*Would* be called." And they laughed, because all know that in a few months the tobacco company will run out of tobacco.

Dada gave her cigarette logo to Čika Fahro, the most famous jeweler in Sarajevo, who produced beautiful cigarette cases for the planned new brand. Čika (who is a Muslim) and his wife, Teta Radmila (a Serbo-Croat), have no children of their own, but five young people have lived with them since the beginning of the war and five others come to work in the attic of their house in the Old Town, depending on the intensity of the shelling. Four are Muslims, three are Serbs, two are Croats and one is a Serbo-Croat, though it's a hassle to get them to tell me their ethnic origin because they all identify themselves as "Bosnian." So much for the impossibility of the three ethnic groups living together.

"In this household we lost 252 pounds all in all," explains Čika when I remark that they've all become slim since I saw them last year. "Bogi lost the most, eighty pounds," says Mladen, the Serb. "I did not lose it," objects Bogi, "they stole it from me. Just imagine, I would be a rich man if I could peddle all this meat at twenty-five deutsche marks a pound," the current price here. They don't buy meat nowadays; it is too expensive. "We eat it in playback; one speaks about it, the others eat bread or rice," jokes Mladen. To enrich their diet they grow salad greens and onions on the balcony in plastic boxes and empty food cans. (Čika is in charge of that.) Bogi, who lives in another part of town, picks *zara*, a weed rich in iron, that they add to the salad. One of Čika's nephews buys the bread, and Bruno (the Croat) brings to the household the food he gets as humanitarian aid. "Sarajevo should be renamed 'Lotograd'—because survival and food distribution are both a lottery," he says.

Survival is certainly a time-consuming occupation, but at least there is plenty of work for jewelers in this war. They produce pendants, earrings and pins with the fleur-de-lis insignia (the symbol of Bosnia) for women, and decorations for the police and the army.

The jewelers and the graphic designers are not exceptions. Most of the cultural community of Sarajevo is very active: there is an army orchestra (it plays Glenn Miller tunes and military marches from memory—all of their sheet music was lost during the war); the Kamerni Theater, which has six plays in its repertoire; fashion shows, rock concerts, disco nights, chess tournaments, photo exhibitions, a Miss Sarajevo contest. The Obala Theater had an exhibition of visual art, and when Miro Purivatra, the manager, finds fuel for the generator, the Obala even shows movies (*Thelma and Louise* was a recent hit). Every evening the local television station has an excellent cultural broadcast called "RAT ART" (*rat* means "war").

Just staying alive in Sarajevo is difficult, but the city's artists push the challenge even further by trying to keep the cultural life alive. They are neither ignorant nor naive: they know that their country is slowly being destroyed as the outside world stares on, passively. But Sarajevo's artists treat their creative work as a way of beating the enemy: they are a dramatic and very literal embodiment of what André Malraux meant when he wrote: *l'art est un anti-destin*—"art is a revolt against destiny." •

Somalia vs. Bosnia. Now.

THE 'DOABLE' WAR

By Patrick Glynn

Anarchy looms in Mogadishu, while Serb forces tighten their death grip on Sarajevo. Eight months after the United States opted to send troops to Somalia and avoid involvement in Bosnia, the result has been a double failure: Somalia is reverting to chaos, while Bosnia threatens to become a geopolitical disaster with implications far beyond the confines of the Balkans.

What went wrong? The two situations provide an occasion for revisiting the debate on intervention that has raged since the end of the Gulf war. At the time of the American deployment to Somalia, some argued against intervention in either conflict, while others pressed for some form of action in both. A number of influential commentators endorsed the Bush position of favoring Somalia over Bosnia, while a smaller group, including myself (see "Why Africa?," TNR, December 28,

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1992), argued that, while laudable in humanitarian terms, the Somalia intervention would prove a mischievous diversion from the real issue, which was Bosnia.

What have we learned in the interim? In the Somalia case, we now surely know that justifying intervention on the grounds of military "doability" as defined by the Pentagon is no substitute for political leadership and strategic clarity. In any case, Somalia turned out to be far from doable. To be sure, the 25,000 American troops—soon reduced to 19,000—who originally occupied the country were able to restore order and secure the distribution of relief with minimal casualties. By midspring the warlords had retreated, the worst of the hunger was over and the country was overflowing with food. Yet official statements to the contrary, the job was far from done.

In early March, U.S. special envoy Robert Oakley announced that "the problem of clan warfare is virtually gone." Leaving Somalia later that month, he declared the U.S. mission "accomplished" and minimized the threat posed by the warlords. "By and large ... they're not interested in resuming large-scale combat," he said. The United States officially handed over command to the United Nations on May 4.

A month and a day later, twenty-four Pakistani peacekeepers were killed in an ambush apparently staged by Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed. Since then a total of thirty-five peacekeepers have died and more than 110 have been injured in daily fighting, in which an estimated 120 Somalis have also perished. Efforts to root out Aideed—spearheaded by some of the 4,000 American troops left behind in Somalia—have so far failed. *Newsweek* reported that Italian peacekeeping forces, whose government favors Aideed as eventual ruler of Somalia, tipped the warlord off about the U.N. raid. Americans and other U.N. soldiers remain bunkered in their compounds, while some relief workers complain that the conditions in Mogadishu are worse than they were before the Marines landed. Relief agencies have curtailed operations in Mogadishu, and following the violent murder of four journalists by a Somali mob, most of the major networks and newspapers withdrew their correspondents.

Of course, not all of Somalia is engulfed in conflict, and hunger is no longer the problem it was eight months ago (partly because of the U.S. intervention and partly because the famine had largely run its natural course). But stabilizing the country remains a massive and virtually impossible undertaking. It's difficult to imagine when the 4,000 American troops left behind in Somalia will ever be able to leave. Other nations that have promised peacekeepers are now balking. South Korea has delayed its promised contingent, and Germany's deployment, recently begun, is highly controversial at home.

The criterion of military ease, as defined by Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Colin Powell (who has now enshrined the Vietnam syndrome into military policy), led directly to this debacle. According to the Bush administration's doctrine of intervention, the United States would only act where its capabilities could bring quick military success. "This is a tragedy of massive proportions," then-acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger said last December, contrasting Somalia with Bosnia, "and, underline this, one that we could do something about." For Powell, the operation was simply a matter of "the cavalry coming to the rescue, straightening things out for a while and then letting the marshals come back in to keep things under control."

The point is that the Pentagon can make operations look easy or impossible, depending on its attitude toward a given conflict. It is almost always risk-averse. (Some of the most successful recent U.S. military operations—e.g., Panama and the Libya bombing—were launched despite strong Pentagon resistance.) When Admiral David E. Jeremiah, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, offered a plausible JCS plan for Somalia in November, Bush administration officials were surprised and gratified; but many suspected the Pentagon was cooperating on Somalia partly to avoid involvement in Bosnia, which Powell, in prescriptive statements on foreign policy unprecedented for a JCS chairman, had publicly opposed.

But the problem goes deeper. The Powell doctrine inverted the logical relationship between ends and means. Rather than intervening where our strategic aims required action, Bush let the means at our disposal shape our strategic aims. The focus on doability assumed that the crises in Somalia and Bosnia were somehow of equal geopolitical importance. This was plainly not the case. As horrifying as the Somalian tragedy may have been, nothing occurring there was likely to affect the calculations of potential aggressors elsewhere in the world. The Balkans were another matter.

Much as critics of the Bush policy predicted in December, U.S. paralysis in Bosnia has already had consequences far beyond the Balkans: encouraging Russian nationalists, weakening moderate Arab governments, inflaming Islamic fundamentalism, precipitating a crisis of confidence in NATO. Following the example of the Serbs, Moscow is now moving to "protect" Russian minorities in the Baltic states, offering blunt diplomatic warnings to Estonia and publicly accusing Latvia of "ethnic cleansing." Riots in Cairo over Bosnia have threatened the pro-Western government of Hosni Mubarak; the West's "double standard" in Bosnia and Iraq has become the rallying cry of Islamic fundamentalists from Dhaka to Tehran.

Despite campaign promises, President Clinton has continued the Bush doctrine of intervention by doability, compounding the problem with overblown and hypocritical rhetoric. On February 10, claiming that the United States had a "direct strategic interest" in preventing the destruction of Bosnia, Secretary of State Warren Christopher promised to bring the "weight of American diplomacy" to bear on the conflict. Clinton later likened ethnic cleansing to the Holocaust. Last week, after a string of ringing pronouncements denouncing war crimes,

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matched by halfhearted policy, Christopher redefined U.S. interests as being merely humanitarian assistance and preventing the war's spread. He claimed the United States was "doing all it could" to help the Bosnians.

Western policy now consists of pressuring the Bosnian government to accept partition—a policy that Christopher's blunt disavowal of U.S. interests seemed calculated to advance. (Proposed NATO air strikes on Serb forces in defense of U.N. peacekeepers were even delayed to keep pressure on the Bosnians.) Ironically, having offered troops to enforce any peace settlement, the United States could find itself in the position of policing Bosnia's dismemberment. Yet even this craven sacrifice of principle—international assent to the dismemberment by force of a U.N. member state—is unlikely to achieve its intended aim. Acceptance of partition may well cause the moderate Bosnian government to fall. The Bosnian army meanwhile—composed of thousands of men whose families have been victimized by Serbia's policy of ethnic murder, rape and expulsion—will fight on: the guerrilla conflict, fueled by arms from Islamic countries of all stripes, could persist for years. Hostilities will doubtless be renewed between Serbia and Croatia, which in the absence of effective international intervention has gradually adopted its own policy of naked *machtpolitik*, combined with ethnic cleansing. The prospect of a widened war, meanwhile, has by no means disappeared. Last week, the handful of international monitors stationed in Kosovo were withdrawn, following Belgrade's refusal to renew their visas, before a new round of "cleansing" against Kosovo's ethnic Albanians. Albania, Turkey and Greece may yet be drawn in. This is to say nothing of the looming humanitarian crisis in Sarajevo—where hunger, disease and cold could kill thousands this winter—or of the massive refugee problem.

Was this avoidable? The answer is yes, if moral and strategic sense had countervailed against the Powell doctrine of doability. From the start, the Pentagon posed the choices in Bosnia as either Vietnam or Desert Storm. But the cold war offered a variety of other paradigms: Afghanistan, where the arming of indigenous forces gradually achieved a major strategic victory; or Libya, where a single bombing raid directed at the national leadership defanged a terrorist bully. Once one recognized the geopolitical importance of Bosnia as the second major crisis of the post-cold war era (after Iraq)—and the need to uphold the principle of its integrity—it made sense to think creatively about means, as we did when faced with far more difficult strategic problems during the cold war. Clinton's "lift and strike" option—combining arms to the Bosnians with air strikes against the Serbs—was a step in the right direction: at least it would have brought the Serbs into serious negotiations and forestalled the current Croat-Muslim split. But gaining support for and carrying out such a policy in the face of allied resistance required steel and involved risks. As in so many other things, Clinton was unwilling to take them.

That is the crux of the problem: in the aftermath of the cold war, the United States is without a serious strategy or larger geopolitical vision, which is why decisions to intervene come to be based—as they were in Somalia—on superficial military considerations. During the cold war, fear of Soviet encroachment made political leaders willing to take risks. The clarity of the end dictated the means. Absent such a clear and present danger, politicians now take the path of least resistance—even though the dangers of inaction are likely to prove just as real. That was largely how the world descended into chaos in the late 1920s and 1930s and why the globe is likely to grow ever more chaotic today. For that, the Clinton administration bears a heavy responsibility.

PATRICK GLYNN is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

Greater Israel in the Mediterranean.

INTO THE SEA

By Irwin Ploss and Jonathan Rubinstein

Taking land from the sea is an old and familiar story. The Dutch, masters of bulkheads, pilings, dikes and polders, have reclaimed 2.2 million acres—3,400 square miles—of drowned lands in the last 500 years. The English rehabilitated 750,000 acres in the Fens, where tidal flooding made land almost useless for agriculture and most other purposes. And some of America's most expensive real estate came from the deep: 4,000 acres—more than a quarter of Manhattan Island—was dredged from New York Harbor and the Hudson and East rivers.

Israel, where land is frighteningly scarce, can benefit from similar geographic expansion. And extending the country's land mass into the Mediterranean could be the byproduct of a project of far greater strategic and practical importance: ensuring the country is not dependent on its Arab neighbors for water.

Last year we argued in this magazine for a "water for peace" plan that would enable Israel to produce 1,000 megawatts of hydroelectric power by flowing 2.5 trillion gallons of water a year from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea. The power, approximately one-fourth of Israel's present output, could be used to desalt 350 billion to 400 billion gallons of water a year, which is about equal to Israel's total water consumption. Why is this important? Because Israel depends on aquifers in the West Bank for 130 billion gallons a year. Carrying out

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the plan would reduce the country's risky dependence on an indispensable resource.

The plan is not without its difficulties, the foremost of which is that it entails enlarging the Dead Sea by 440 square miles. This would require excavating at least 300 billion cubic yards of soil and rock. The question is what does a tiny country do with all this earth?

Perhaps the answer lies in using it to extend the country by creating crescent-shaped land masses in the Mediterranean. If the additions, parallel to eighty miles of coast, extended from four to eight miles offshore, approximately 375 square miles at sea level—240,000 acres—would be created. This would leave room along the 110-mile coastline for ships to enter Israel's existing ports.

The crescents of new land, whose tips would touch the coastline, would enclose large salt water lakes. If the water were to be pumped out of these lakes, Israel would gain an additional 350 square miles of below sea-level lowland areas (about one-tenth of the reclaimed areas of Holland). The pumped-out lowland areas—called polders—are likely to be archaeological treasure troves at first, and may be excellent agricultural land in the future. Some of the salt lakes could be retained for fish farming and recreation.

Seven hundred and twenty-five square miles—460,000 acres—of new land altogether. Think of the uses. Tel Aviv desperately needs a new airport—3,000 acres would do the trick. And Israel could, as many economists have suggested, create an offshore free-trade zone for its manufactured goods.

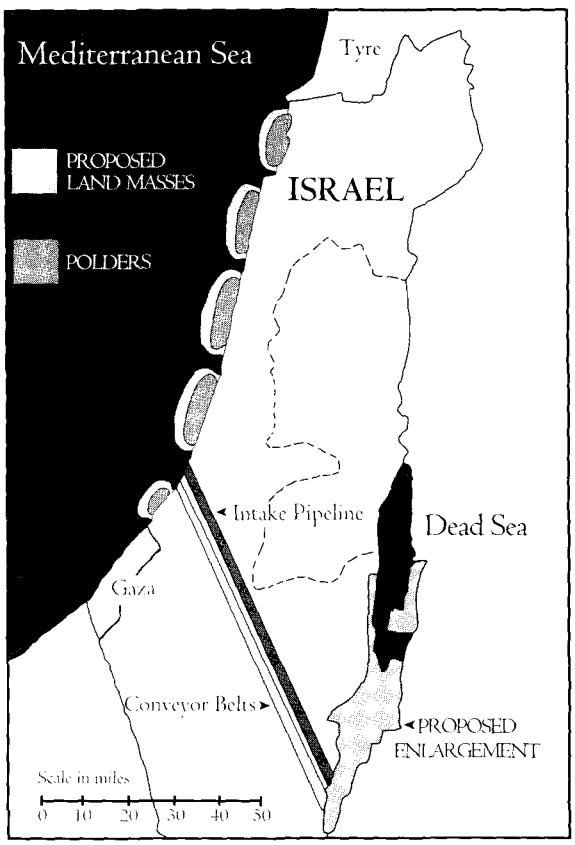

ILLUSTRATION BY FRANK FURIO; STYLED BY JIM HOLLOWAY FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

More important, the new land might help Israel attract and maintain the population so central to its security. The country is having an increasingly difficult time satisfying immigrants from the former Soviet Union and elsewhere; in addition to a scarcity of good jobs, deserts simply are not pleasant places to live. Adding 725 square miles of attractive, habitable space would go a long way toward improving the lives of immigrants.

Almost 80 percent of Israelis live on fewer than 1,000 square miles of narrow plain parallel to the Mediterranean. That is where much of the intellectual and cultural life is centered, where the climate is most pleasant and where it is safest. The new land, much of it oceanfront property, would be in great demand. The cost of creating it would be a small fraction of its property value. If, for example, the land were to be sold for $100,000 per acre, the 460,000 acres would be worth $46 billion. One half of this would cover the entire cost of creating the land *and* the cost of desalination plants, a hydroelectric power station near the Dead Sea, the canal for bringing the Mediterranean Sea water to the Dead Sea and the excavation. (It should be noted that $100,000 per acre is a very low price by Israeli standards. At present only a few hundred thousand acres are privately owned. Prices are high: desirable industrial land sells for up to several million dollars an acre.)

The entire construction need not be undertaken at once. Because the land masses are self-contained, they can be built individually. In fact, proceeds from the sale of one completed crescent of land could be used to finance the construction of the next. Moreover, the Dead Sea extension does not have to be entirely excavated before the canal, power plants and desalination plants can be used—these can all be phased in.

The transportation of the excavated earth from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean for the construction of the land masses is a large undertaking. It could, however, be accomplished with conveyer belts, which would carry dug-up material from sea to sea. For example, 100 parallel conveyer belts could move about 88 billion cubic yards of soil and rock—enough to create the proposed 460,000 acres—in about ten years. Wide-gauge railroads might also be considered.

Some of the excavated earth would be used to construct the sea-level conduit bringing salt water from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea. Some could be used to create a large, level field in the Negev for the production of solar power, which requires land free of shadows from hills. The rest would be stored near the Dead Sea and saved for the construction of future land masses.

The plan's possibilities should provide an incentive for the United States to offer the services of the Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies to verify its feasibility and to study its possible environmental effects. Those who fear the plan is too grandiose should bear in mind what Alexander the Great accomplished 2,300 years ago. He conquered wealthy Tyra, an island fortress a half mile off the coast, by constructing a causeway to its wall. Alexander's causeway still exists, buried deep beneath modern Tyra. Recently, the Japanese have built an island airport three miles off the coast of

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Osaka. Skeptics should also not that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, since it was chartered in 1902, has constructed an average of 620 miles of canals, pipelines and tunnels per year, in addition to dams, reservoirs and power plants. From 1971 to 1990 reclamation projects brought in more than $52 billion in taxes to the U.S. Treasury. The original mission of the Bureau of Reclamation was to provide a secure, year-round supply of water for the arid lands of the West. The water and hydroelectric power it has produced have repaid the cost of construction many times over, in dollars, food and jobs. Reclamation hydropower serves 8 million families.

While this proposal is dwarfed by U.S. achievements, the benefits could be enormous for Israel. There will be disruption to the lives of people who live near the conveyer belts and construction sites, but those disadvantages would certainly be outweighed by the benefits of employment, electric power, water and land. Israel has an 11 percent unemployment rate. Eleven percent of its population lives below the official poverty line. It is short of water. It is short of electric power. It is accepting immigrants at the rate of 7,000 per month and has been unable to provide them with jobs or to house them in places they want to live.

For more than a half century, Israel has resisted the threats from a half-dozen countries to cast it into the sea. This angry rhetoric has been thwarted by military success and the support of the United States. While no technical solution will automatically bring about peace, we believe that, ironically, a great step toward security in the region can be taken if Israel voluntarily casts itself upon the sea.

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The only sane health care reform.

BITTER PILL

By Robert Shapiro

At the heart of the debate over health care is not a question of health or even of health policy, but a simple question of economics: What should the government do when people want more of some good than the economy will produce at prices they're willing or able to pay? If such economic conundrums didn't exist, President Clinton could fulfill his promise of universal health care and simply tell business and government to cover everyone for every condition, right away. But because they exist, and because our current health care market allows most people to consume medical services without much regard to cost or price, such a vast expansion in demand for these services would produce even faster-rising health care inflation. As demand for health care intensified, the industry would attract even more capital and skilled workers, undercutting growth by raising the cost of the same resources for everyone else. The cure could actually exacerbate the disease.

Behind this truth lie two simple laws of economics. The first is that prices rise when demand increases and supply doesn't expand as quickly. Universal coverage by itself, therefore, would inevitably accelerate health care inflation. And if this coverage is to include not only basic insurance for those now lacking it but also long-term care, prescription medicine, mental health services and more—as many in the administration want—upward pressures on health care prices would further intensity.

The second law is that economic demand for a good tends to increase as its price falls. So long as the health care marketplace lets most people avoid paying directly for the medical services they choose, demand for health care will never be tamed and prices will keep rising.

If there's any doubt that these laws matter, ask yourself how the problem of universal coverage arose. Public and private health insurance for most of us—elderly and poor people, and most of those employed and their families—has vastly expanded demand for medical services, raising costs for those paying for the coverage and forcing insurers to exclude more people and more conditions from coverage. These laws, then, produce an economic paradox for health care reform: in our current "cost-unconscious" medical marketplace, a guarantee of universal coverage would tend to price itself out of the reach of those guaranteed it.

Most of the health care debate rests on how we can avoid this crippling paradox. One response is simply to impose government limits on costs. The trouble here, of course, is that there's no economic evidence to support the claim that controls could work for health care in any recognizable way. Health care, of all industries, is

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Who Cares Anyway?

To hear President Clinton talk about it, one would presume that Americans are so distraught about the rising cost of health care that revolutionary reform is the most politically sensible response. But the reality of public opinion is quite different.

True, a substantial majority of Americans believe the health care system is broken—and the numbers have gone up considerably in recent months, as Clinton has made that case persuasively. But by wide margins, Americans are pleased with their own health care. Indeed, according to a recent *Time*/CNN poll, 78 percent are satisfied with the services available to them; 73 percent are content with the health care their families receive, according to an NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll; and 61 percent, according to a Mellman & Lazarus/Public Opinion Strategies study, believe the system is meeting the needs of their family.

Other surveys consistently yield the same results. Unlike many other countries, where citizens are unhappy with the availability or quality of health services, Americans like what they get in terms of doctor, hospital and pharmaceutical care and the rest. This creates a problem for policy-makers and policy-changers. Americans want fundamental change in the health system, but they don't want fundamental change in their *own* situations. They don't want to change or lose the services they now get. They just want to expand their availability while reducing costs.

Immediately following Clinton's State of the Union message, *Time*/CNN asked a national sample a common question: "What is the main problem facing the country today?" Fifty four percent chose the economy, including the deficit or unemployment and jobs. Ten percent picked politicians and/or government. The rest split into single digits, choosing issues from drugs to crime to AIDS to education. *Not even 1 percent picked health care.* To be sure, this poll result may be an anomaly. But the fact remains that other polls showed that between 3 percent and 5 percent typically chose health care as the country's biggest problem. These numbers have not grown appreciably in 1992 or 1993.

The numbers rise considerably if the question is phrased as the *two* biggest problems facing the country; an election eve Harris survey found that 20 percent picked health care as one of the two most important issues for the newly elected president and Congress to deal with during the first 100 days. But of that same group, 52 percent chose the economy, 25 percent selected jobs and employment and 23 percent named the deficit and budget.

Harris also asked the open-ended question, "What major changes, if any, would you like to see in the country's health care system?" Controlling or reducing costs and fees predominated, with 58 percent. By contrast, 33 percent said we needed to make health care available to everybody. Stretching the responses to include those who said "a national health plan" or "a plan like Canada's" brought the numbers up to 49 percent. When asked, "What is the single most important change you'd like to see in the U.S. health care system?" by CBS/*New York Times*, only 22 percent chose universal coverage.

It is not that Americans lack compassion. But the fact is that though 37 million Americans lack health coverage, 215 million, including most of the elderly, have it. The insured are more concerned with their own coverage—retaining it, making sure it is adequate, keeping costs in line—than with the problems of others.

One of the main features that distinguishes the American health system from others is the availability of expensive, high-tech treatments—CAT scans, MRIs, organ transplants. Limiting these services is a priority for experts. But not for voters. Fifty seven percent would not give up expensive treatments. (That includes mental health care: 80 percent want it covered.) By contrast, 53 percent would be willing to choose a doctor from a list, and 51 percent would be willing to pay a higher deductible, according to CBS/*New York Times*.

It may not be surprising, given the rhetoric about doctor's fees, malpractice suits and the health care industry's lobbying groups, that voters blame high costs largely on the special interests. Yankelovich finds 81 percent single out malpractice lawyers; 79 percent, hospitals; 78 percent each, doctors and health insurance companies; 75 percent, prescription drug manufacturers; 66 percent, the federal government. As for patients, they are held responsible by a less-than-robust 32 percent.

Most Americans would trade some money for greater security—more assurance that their health benefits will move with them from job to job and that prolonged medical problems won't lead to financial disaster. A popularity poll of different types of taxes that might be used to pay for a national health insurance plan reflects these perceptions. At the top of the list, 76 percent of voters support an increase in the taxes on liquor and cigarettes. Sixty-one percent support an increase in personal income taxes for those earning more than $50,000 a year—but 67 percent oppose such an increase for those earning more than $25,000. Fifty-five percent support a new tax paid by doctors, hospitals and insurers. By 49 percent to 44 percent, voters support an increase in the payroll tax that *employers* pay; but by 60 percent to 34 percent, they oppose increasing the payroll taxes that *employees* pay.

If polls show that Americans support mutual sacrifice for a greater good, however, they also show that voters do not believe health reform means taking away or eroding the services they get—and like. To the public, reform means more services for less money, with the difference paid for by reining in and taxing the special health interests who are responsible for the current mess.

This gap between public expectations and the harsh realities of what we can expect from a health policy is sobering. As the Clintons go to the public to make their case on health care, public perceptions will likely change, and presenting a radical reform proposal is probably necessary to begin the process. But the president is not likely to alter quickly the public's perceptions of what they want the package to look like, or to convince voters (and Congress) to make the necessary leap of faith.

Major, sweeping change rarely occurs in American policy history. When it does, it is usually precipitated by a crisis, like a war or depression, or a critical election that brings dramatic change to the partisan alignments in Washington. The data suggest that none of those conditions exists now. Indeed, if public opinion is any indication, the health care revolution is not around the corner, or even down the street.

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famously complex, with tens of thousands of separate facilities where billions of annual transactions are carried out, providing thousands of different services and using tens of thousands of different goods, in a technologically dynamic sector. It's in sectors like these that businesses are notorious for their protean capacity for preserving their revenues and profits in the face of price controls. Health care is no exception. When the government froze Medicare Part B doctors' charges in the mid-1980s, costs continued to increase as physicians reported visiting their patients more often, shifting to more highly reimbursed treatments and ordering more tests that required little of their own time.

Medicare's current Prospective Payment System, which pays hospitals at pre-set rates for each illness rather than for each procedure, is just as fickle. Over the last few years, the system has modestly slowed Medicare cost increases as hospitals began to emphasize less costly out-patient services. But total health care costs have continued to rise unaffected, because hospitals offset the loss of revenues by charging everyone else more. Today hospitals recover from the government about 90 percent of the costs of treating a Medicare patient—and charge privately insured people 128 percent of the costs for the same treatments. And if the reforms try to bring the entire system under price and wage controls, payments will always depend on the diagnoses over which hospitals, doctors and health maintenance organizations would retain control.

Another option in the government-control solution would be to control the flow of insurance premiums so that only a predetermined share of the nation's income could go to health care under a "global budget." Everyone—doctors and nurses, HMOs and hospitals, insurers and suppliers—would negotiate or fight for their shares. If all businesses and workers are required to pay government-set fees to insurance-purchasing pools (health purchasing insurance cooperatives) to cover their health insurance, and the fees increase according to some set measure such as payroll costs, health care providers would have to offer their services for the resources allowed them by the government.

In practice, such a global budget wouldn't contain health care inflation for long, however, because it fails to address the pressures driving up health care prices. If the total revenues for the health care system were limited by an act of government rather than by measures that enable markets to discipline demand, people would continue to ask for high levels of costly services that could not be paid for by the resources set by the government. HMO directors responsible for keeping their groups afloat would shift, on average, to those services providing the highest returns on their costs. And when resources run out in the eleventh or twelfth month of the global budget—when the government guesses wrong about the revenues necessary to provide good treatment at a particular hospital or HMO—something important will give. Either people will go untreated, so that universal coverage becomes less universal; or next year's premiums will increase by more than promised, and in so doing bust the global budget; or next year's reimbursements will fall, and force the squeeze on revenues and treatment.

The brutal truth is that providing universal care, while restraining costs, requires a subtler, harder attempt to reform the entire structure of the health care industry. That's why the answer weighed most seriously by the Clinton administration is along these systemic lines: a hybrid of managed competition and a single-payer system, by which the advisers hope to unleash economic pressures compelling doctors, hospitals and others to reorganize themselves more efficiently, and so cut their costs even in the face of higher demand. But even here, the laws of economics suggest the administration's current path will lead to only partial success.

The strategy has two basic elements. The first addresses patient demand for medical services. The second comprises reforms of the health care marketplace that will force health care providers to compete on the basis of value and price, like suppliers of other services in the economy.

First, demand is disciplined by compelling people to pay more for their insurance. In one version, firms would be able to deduct only part of the insurance premiums they pay for their employees, which should encourage businesses to shop for the most efficient coverage. But most firms have been insurance-shopping for a decade, without any discernible effect on health care prices. In another version, all employers would have to pay a fixed amount per worker or a fixed share of their payrolls to cover part of their employees' insurance; workers would pay the rest of the premiums themselves, which should direct people to cheaper plans with fewer services.

Alone, these incentives won't do the trick. For real impact, you would also need to limit the deductibility of employer-provided health insurance to the cost of the cheapest package of basic benefits available in the market, providing a direct incentive for firms to choose the most efficient and lean insurance plans. Second, you would need to heighten the pressure on everyone by counting as a person's taxable income part of the premiums or payroll fees paid in his or her name by an employer. The object here is to enable something like a genuine insurance marketplace to emerge, in which the normal economic constraints that make people weigh one possible purchase against another would apply to choosing broader or more limited medical insurance. Choices naturally narrow when your life is at stake, and most people see medical insurance as providing security that they and their families wouldn't lose their lives if they couldn't afford acute treatment. But higher personal co-payments for non-life threatening services could offset some of the price pressures of universal coverage.

The second element of tough-minded managed com-

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petition involves reforms of the health care industry, principally by creating statewide or regional health purchasing insurance cooperatives with broad regulatory powers. HPICs would operate something like the New York Stock Exchange, bringing together buyers and sellers and setting rules of trade that force insurers to compete on the basis of price and value. The cooperatives would collect everyone's premiums and help consumers choose among competing insurers and plans by assembling and publishing standard information about the output and outcomes of every plan. And under the HPIC's new rules of trade for insurance, price discrimination that denies coverage or sets premiums on the basis of people's pre-existing conditions would end. Instead, a standard national package of basic benefits would be defined, which all insurers would have to offer to everyone at prices unaffected by people's current health status. Insurance firms would have to agree to these terms or lose the right to sell coverage through the HPICs—an ultimate threat when nearly everyone pays their premiums through them. And by agreeing to these terms, they're forced to meet the competition of rivals offering the standard package for less money or with better outcomes—or face the commercial consequences.

This strategy would certainly bring on a broad shakeout of the industry, leaving many fewer, if better, insurers standing. In order to survive, insurers would have to limit their basic business to health care providers that find ways to deliver their services more efficiently. And there is no mystery about how these efficiencies would be found: managed competition would produce a lemminglike rush toward HMOs and preferred provider organizations, which replace fee-for-service medicine by physicians of patients' choosing with blanket coverage for a per-person price by a staff of salaried doctors, nurses and other assistants.

In theory, this approach packs real economic punch; by one reasonable estimate, a doctor in an HMO can cover roughly two to three times the patient load of private, fee-for-service physicians. Yet to date HMOs have not spread quickly, as most Americans insist on choosing their own doctors and most doctors insist on conducting their own practices. So far, most HMOs have priced their services only a whisker under fee-for-service. In short, the savings simply haven't materialized.

Happily, recent experience with health care for public workers in California provides some hope that HMOs can deliver health care more efficiently and cheaply when paired with HPICs. In other words, it's not enough for there to be more competition; it has to be more intense competition as well. For real savings, the intensity has to be considerable.

To accomplish this, you need incentives for the HMO's doctors and nurses to recommend fewer and cheaper services. The trouble is, they often can't be certain about how much testing and treatment a patient needs or, perhaps more precisely, what services a patient *doesn't* need. Many will overprescribe, whether or not they practice in HMOs, so long as they can be sued for not ordering more services that might prove helpful, and so long as they bear no cost for ordering services that prove unnecessary. To drive up the average HMO's cost effectiveness, the reforms have to include broad malpractice protection for physicians practicing standard but not extraordinary medicine, and perhaps incentives for employee ownership or profit-sharing by HMO physicians and nurses.

How would reforms like these protect the quality of care as its quantity and costs are reduced? The answer, in a word, is professionalism. The best way we know to ensure that the cost-cutting incentives don't deny sick people the treatment they need is to continue to rely on the independent judgment of highly trained and highly paid physicians and nurses for treatment decisions. Insurance and co-payment fees must be set at levels sufficient to maintain substantial incomes for medical professionals, who must be able to retain the independence that professionals expect—or American medicine will have to settle for people less equipped or inclined to ensure high-quality care.

If we truly want to establish universal coverage *and* slow the growth of health care costs—and do so without injuring the economy—we will have to accept deep changes in our health care practices. Most of us will have to give up the right to choose our own specialists, all but the truly poor will have to pay part of the cost of nearly every procedure and everyone will have to forfeit the ability to win large judgments for malpractice and accept that doctors will still earn more than most of us.

And even if we do all this, health care costs will continue to rise faster than other goods and services for some time—and not only because health care prices can never be fully disciplined by people's willingness to pay personally for the services. In addition, the numbers of us who are elderly and so require costly routine care will continue to increase, the mushrooming AIDS epidemic will continue to spread and the processes by which we achieve technological advances in medical care will continue to be phenomenally expensive.

Clinton's challenge in health care is the same as the one he faces in deficit reduction: to persuade the middle class that they will have to make real sacrifices. He will have to teach the country that the government's proper role in health care is not to let the current "cost-unconscious" arrangements persist or to replace them with regulation, but to improve the market's ground rules in order to gradually achieve universal coverage while restoring the connection between spending and value in health care. He cannot do this overnight; and certainly not on the timetable (and with some of the centralizing controls) proposed by many of his health care advisers. The president has to convince Americans who feel they can barely afford health care today that they should accept additional costs and burdens in order to keep their coverage secure and the economy sound. It's a dizzyingly tall order. But the only one that can work. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Midsummer Roundup

Rising Sun (20th Century Fox). Wake up, Sean Connery. You're getting old. You were born in 1930—one source says 1929—and you are no longer merely "mature." You keep yourself trim and you're full of vigor, but it's getting just a bit silly for you to be outdoing younger men physically. (Something that your contemporary, Clint Eastwood, never does.) You did it in a recent flaming nonsense called *Medicine Man*, in which you were a scientist in a Latin American jungle who flitted between trees on high-wire gadgets to the envy of all. You're doing it again here, as a sort of special agent of the Los Angeles Police Department.

Not only do you have a beautiful young mistress (less incredible) but you run faster than your younger detective-partner, you leap and bound more briskly than he does, you deal out karate chops and swirl through other physical virtuosities in one action sequence after another.

And of course you're also smarter than anyone else in the film. Not impossible at your age, certainly, but it does bring yet another wry smile to the viewer's face. Odd, too, that for *Rising Sun* as for *Medicine Man*, you were the executive producer.

Perhaps on your next executive producing job, you'll not only cut yourself a more believable character, you'll find a more cogent story than this adaptation of Michael Crichton's controversial novel, a supposed thriller about Japanese corporate skullduggery in L.A. that zigzags and crosses its own trail so often that it's dizzyingly tedious long before the end.

La Vie de Bohème (Kino International). It's decades since I read Henri Murger's novel, but Aki Kaurismäki contends that his film is much closer to the text than the libretto of Puccini's opera. I'm willing to take his word because he has kept it on another point: his intent to purge Bohème of Puccini-ism.

If it were possible to define postmodernism acceptably, then Kaurismäki might be called postmodern. He has set his film in present-day Paris and has stripped every flounce of romance from the story as most of us know it. Under the rubric of returning to the past, he has discarded subservience to nostalgia—to let his characters make their own way free of expectations, ours or theirs.

True to Murger or not, it's a bit as if he had torn the wings off butterflies to see how they would get along wingless. Shorn of the trappings for which Puccini is famously responsible, Kaurismäki's people have a gritty time of it. They seem more like weary aging hippies than spirited opponents of bourgeois convention. The worst of it is that his people don't affect us in any way. This is presumably what he wanted, and this took some courage on his part; but after we get tired of admiring his courage, what's left to engage us?

He made it in French with some of the actors familiar from his earlier films set in his own country, Finland. However, the only actor who really registers is French, André Wilms as Marcel. As a bow to Kaurismäki, the directors Samuel Fuller and Louis Malle appear briefly. Well, he deserves a bow or two for his witty impertinence; but I hope that more films like his *Ariel* lie ahead of him.

Road Scholar (Samuel Goldwyn). One of the convenient aspects of national portraits is that you can light them any way you like. In no country is this more true than ours. A documentarian can easily make an absolutely factual film showing the USA as beautiful or hideous, prosperous or impoverished, tasteful or vulgar. From this axiom it can be argued—rightly—that all documentaries about national conditions are untrustworthy; but, aware of that, we can take any single documentary, if made by an honest person, as one strand in a thick fabric.

Andrei Codrescu, a Romanian-born poet who came here in 1966, is now a familiar figure on National Public Radio. Not long ago he made a trip across the continent in a 1968 Cadillac, accompanied by the director Roger Weisberg and crew, poking into whatever interested him along the way. Beginning in New York, where he talks with Allen Ginsberg, he hits high and low spots across the map, not all of them unfamiliar: among them, a Christian commune in New York state, the desolations of Detroit, the titanic trivialities of Las Vegas, the frantic obstreperousness of highway signs for motels and eateries and souvenir shops, the increase in gurus as one wends westward, the local-pride bonhomie

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Guilty As Sin. *A moderately twisty thriller, empowered by the acting of Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson and the directing of Sidney Lumet. (Reviewed 7/5/93)* **In the Line of Fire.** *Clint Eastwood as a Secret Service agent who failed to protect JFK adequately and is now guarding the current president. John Malkovich as an avowed assassin. A real zinger. (8/9/93)* **Much Ado About Nothing.** *Much ado about a great deal. Emma Thompson and Kenneth Branagh excel in this generally exquisite rendering of Shakespeare's comedy-drama. (5/10/93)* **The Music of Chance.** *Paul Auster's novel sensitively transmuted. James Spader and Mandy Patinkin, as two poker players who pay a weird price for losing, are in tune and on pitch. (6/21/93)* **—SK**

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of San Francisco. The one entirely fresh sequence for me was the drive-in wedding ceremony in Nevada: the couple doesn't even have to get out of the car.

All of this could have constituted a catalog mostly of grunge, physical and otherwise—*that* slice of the American pie—but Codrescu, born under Stalin and still wonderstruck by America, supplies a commentary that appreciates the freedom to have grunge along with other things. A Polish-born novelist I once knew in New York got bad reviews for a book of his, and when I commiserated, he shrugged and said, "Well, at least the police won't come in the morning to arrest me." Codrescu has tempered the satirical with the appreciative, and that very mixture gives his film a touch of novelty.

The Wedding Banquet (Samuel Goldwyn). It doesn't take much experience to learn how little festival prizes have to do with inherent quality; still, some prizes are more puzzling than others. This one, for instance.

The Wedding Banquet won the Golden Bear award, the top prize, at this year's Berlin Film Festival. Why? Was it for reasons of cultural diversity? The director and most of the actors are Chinese. Was it for social liberalism? The center of the story is a homosexual pair. Perhaps the combination of the two factors was irresistible.

I hope that explains this prize. Misplaced though such criteria are, they are at least comprehensible. It would be terrifying to think that the judges gave this lame comedy the Golden Bear because they thought it was intrinsically of high quality.

The plot centers on two young men, one Chinese, one American, who are lovers in New York. The Chinese man's parents, who know nothing of their son's preferences, come from Taiwan for a visit, so the male pair have to rearrange their lives during the visit. (A whiff of *La Cage aux Folles.*) A young Chinese woman is brought in as a "beard." Labored plot convolutions bring about a marriage and her pregnancy. The groom is desperate, his lover enraged. Things are worked out at length to everyone's satisfaction but ours.

The director and co-author, Ang Lee, shows no notable fluency in either function. The male lovers are inadequately performed. The only interest in this creaky venture comes from May Chin, as the fiery young woman, and Ah-Leh Gua, a beautiful woman and competent actress, who plays the bridegroom's mother.

Golden Bore. •

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THE Public Interest

NUMBER 112, SUMMER 1993, PRICE: $5.50

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Parents, work and the durability of the family.

Home Repairs

BY ANN HULBERT

I.

To become a parent is suddenly to become, among other things, vulnerable to two intense and contradictory terrors. The first is panic at any suggestion or evidence that harm might come to a helpless child; the fear is as visceral as parental love itself. The second is an appalled recognition in oneself of feelings that could lead to such harm. It's a rare mother or father who hasn't been overcome for a few horrifying moments by rage, frustration or a nearly irresistible urge to overpower a small person who is clearly helpless but who also seems, for those few moments, impossible: proof that it was a mistake ever to become a parent.

These private terrors of childrearing, which thankfully exist mostly in mind and not in deed, have their counterpart in public feelings about the family. Intense faith in the institution as the indispensable protector of children thrives alongside abiding fears about its fragility. It's an unstable mixture, which helps to explain why changes on the domestic front so readily ignite full-scale crises about the future of the family. The warnings are usually dire: the whole idea of the family is in danger of disappearing, or of becoming unrecognizable. Like other millenial prophesies, such extreme predictions repeatedly prove false without ever losing their power.

Another crisis of the American family has now crested, with Dan Quayle most dramatically and, as it turned out, unsuccessfully riding the wave. His warnings, which were packaged as an attack on Hollywood's glamorization of single motherhood in Murphy Brown, aimed to polarize the public ambivalence about the family in a now standard way. He proceeded on the common belief (it's there in Dr. Spock) that a gulf looms between parental intuitions about the family and elite, or expert, attitudes toward it. Broadly, traditional faith in the family's nurturing values is seen to animate one side, and culturally relativistic skepticism about its structure the other; parents take the trust-your-basic-instincts line, experts counsel second-guessing and open-mindedness. Quayle hoped to promote the standard and popular view of the nuclear family as a fortress of personal responsibility and self-restraint. His strategy was to condemn the elite alternative: the assumption of the family's fragility and contingency, the acceptance of single-parent arrangements as the inevitable result of impersonal social and economic forces at work.

The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap
by Stephanie Coontz
(Basic Books, 391 pp., $27)

The Subversive Family: An Alternative History of the Family
by Ferdinand Mount
(The Free Press, 282 pp., $24.95)

The Family in the Western World: From the Black Death to the Industrial Age
by Beatrice Gottlieb
(Oxford University Press, 309 pp., $30)

The Politics of Parenthood: Child Care, Women's Rights, and the Myth of the Good Mother
by Mary Frances Berry
(Viking, 303 pp., $22.50)

Lives on the Edge: Single Mothers and Their Children in the Other America
by Valerie Polakow
(University of Chicago Press, 222 pp., $22.50)

Fatherhood in America: A History
by Robert L. Griswold
(Basic Books, 356 pp., $24)

The response was not at all what Quayle had in mind. No battle lines were drawn. Even more unexpected, the sides seemed to have gotten switched. Among the public, the Murphy Brown affair fell flat; the portrayal of variations on the '50s-style family did not stir popular panic about corroding values. Among the experts, by contrast, a "Dan Quayle Was Right" consensus has coalesced since then. After roughly two decades of studious neutrality about different family arrangements, the two-parent model has suddenly become the rallying cry of family commissions, policy analysts and social scientists. They hail it not only as the best hedge against poverty for children, but also as the only reliable prescription for their success and happiness.

The current family crisis, in other words, is not unfolding by the book. The result so far looks like the kind of inconclusive muddle that so often punctuates the public and private history of families. The unexpected popular tolerance of diversity is not exactly enthusiastic. There is plenty of anxious confusion among baby boomers about changes in the family. As for the experts, a heavy dose of easy self-congratulation is apparent in their embrace of the old family norm. Making up for more than two decades of agnosticism, their faith in the two-parent standard is heavy on rhetoric and nostalgia, as if invoking the broad ideal of intact family life represents a major breakthrough. The precarious postures of both sides suggest that parents and experts may well have merely traded places, temporarily and defensively.

In fact, it is time for a realignment, but not a reversal, of perspectives on the family. The two-parent nuclear family norm, alternately revered and distrusted as a homogeneous standard, is not ready for replacement—despite the widespread, much more alarming impression that a post-nuclear age is at hand. The statistics on the family are indeed disorienting, not least because they tend to rain down in an ominous way, in squalls that dump numbers out of context. But rounding up some basic figures serves as a reminder that, despite great changes, the two-parent family continues to prevail, though neither widely nor simply.

On the one hand, variations on the married couple family model are now substantially more common, although the pace of family change has slowed over the last decade. Almost 30 percent of all American families are headed by one parent, up from about 20 percent in 1980. The most dramatic evidence of splintering families continues to be found among blacks, but the rate of increase in both single parenthood and illegitimacy is now higher among whites. Roughly 28 percent of all babies are born to mothers who have never been married, compared with 18 percent in 1980. And rates of teenage parenthood are still quite high, as is the likelihood of marital collapse: between 40 and 50 percent of all

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marriages will end in divorce.

On the other hand, the two-parent family still dominates—yet in a far from monolithic or homogeneous way. Households with two parents comfortably take the lead among white families, 83 percent of which are headed by married couples; two-parent households make up almost half of black families. Among married pairs, both white and black, old-style simplicity has disappeared with the rise of divorce and remarriage rates, and the increase in working mothers. Only 61 percent of all children live with both biological parents. And nearly 60 percent of mothers with kids under 6, and three-quarters with kids between 6 and 12, now have jobs.

In short, the experts' data, however confusing, confirm what most Americans know from intimate or proximate experience: the new standard is, in effect, the two *working*-parent family, which is not a tried and true, or uniform, institution by any means. It was Marilyn Quayle, not Dan Quayle, who touched the real nerve on the subject of the family during the campaign, in her speech at the Republican convention. Though she was attacked by feminists for championing full-time housewifery as a duty, she in fact acknowledged that it had become a far from automatic choice in a country populated by more and more working mothers. She had confronted an issue on which Americans, ordinary and expert, are still not close to a consensus.

This development in family life, however destabilizing in its own way, is of a different order from other transformations in American households. The rise in working mothers is a change that leaves the nuclear family intact—an internal, rather than an external, alteration. And it is a change that brings economic benefits, not disadvantages. In fact, the two-paycheck family, as even its detractors increasingly admit, is largely the product of economic necessity—as men's wages stagnate, divorce rates remain high, house prices rise and the costs of college soar.

The two working-parent family is beginning to be considered a cultural necessity as well, rather than an ideologically charged choice. One needn't be a strident feminist to conclude, as Richard T. Gill and T. Grandon Gill do in *The Public Interest*, of all places, that "in a long life expectancy, low birth rate society, there really is no serious alternative to major lifelong working careers for most women. The career of full-time wife, mother and homemaker has simply ceased to be an adequate life project."

It's important to emphasize that this two working-parent nuclear family looks familiar in a very significant way: there are two parents. But it's also important to recognize that it is a much less homogeneous norm than the mother-at-home scenario, in which roles tend to be comparatively neatly scripted. The challenges of balancing child care and work, of meeting private and public demands and desires, plainly raise many new questions about how even the best-off families will manage. That Tolstoy was wrong when he said that all happy families are alike now is, or should be, clearer than ever.

II.

So what might the popular and expert views have to say to each other during this awkward age of the nuclear family? The most likely guess would be nothing much, given that they have rarely managed to talk at all. According to the standard formulation of the two perspectives, each focuses on a different landscape and uses a different language, as Barbara Dafoe Whitehead of the Institute for American Values has put it. The "family" language of ordinary middle-class people is private and moral, dealing in duties and emotions; it takes its

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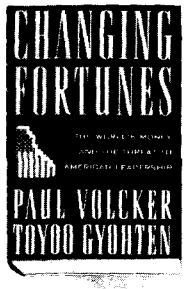

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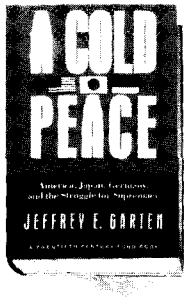

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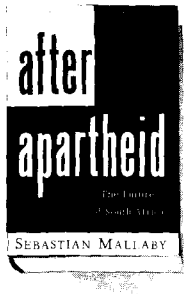

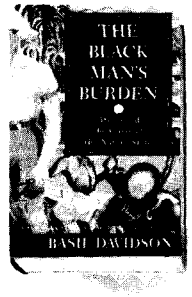

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bearings from personal ideals and is said to be preoccupied with how families should live. The terminology is judgmental: stable, intact households build virtuous, productive citizens. The "official" language of experts is social and instrumental, guided by public needs and preoccupied with how families actually live; it speaks of economics and entitlements. The emphasis is on the government's neutrally supportive role, above all in aiding non-intact families. Most of the time the two languages babble on harmoniously enough side by side, with occasional shouting matches during family crises, yet they never really converse.

Two examples of what can happen when they try to talk emerge in new, and very different, histories of the family by Ferdinand Mount and Stephanie Coontz. Each of them takes a spiritedly debunking approach. Mount, proceeding as a popular polemicist, challenges what he considers to be official myths about the fragile family; Coontz, a professional historian, confronts what she identifies as popular illusions about the sturdy family. The outcome of their mirror-image battles is not what either intends, but it actually proves more useful. They don't convincingly demolish the legends they set up, not least because they caricature them. Instead, they end up undermining the stereotyped versions of their own perspectives, Mount helpfully unsettling the notion of middle-class sanctimony about family duty, and Coontz casting doubt on the experts' supposed relativism about family structure.

An erstwhile adviser to Margaret Thatcher and an amateur historian, Mount singles out professional historians and rulers (ecclesiastical and radically left-wing, in particular) as the experts in need of an earful. In fact what he has to say about them is not all that new. Mount declares war on totalitarian attitudes toward the family as if they were still a clear and present danger, a dated focus that betrays the book's origins: *The Subversive Family* was first published in England ten years ago.

His dispute with the historians has been overtaken by events in a different way. Mount's basic line is now a conventional view within the profession, as Beatrice Gottlieb's survey of the past decade's work in family history, *The Family in the Western World*, confirms. Citing scattered but colorful historical sources, Mount joins in questioning the contours of the case presented by revisionist scholars of the last thirty years such as Philippe Aries, Lawrence Stone, Edward Shorter and others; he takes issue with the notion that the familiar, affectionate nuclear household of parents and children emerged only after the Industrial Revolution, replacing an extended family linked above all by economic interests.

Instead he argues a characteristically strident, and very broad, version of a quite widespread post-revisionist position: that the basic nuclear family structure, far from a malleable product of changing historical forces, has prevailed for a long time. And will, Mount is convinced, continue to prevail. He pronounces it "a biologically derived way of living which comes naturally to us and which generates an emotional force of enduring and unquenchable power."

It is what Mount has to say about his own, popular view—about that "emotional force"—that turns out to be unexpected. Just when you think he's about to wax conventional about the virtuousness of the "unquenchable power," Mount shakes up the usual "family" and "official" vocabularies. It turns out that he has no interest in elevating the selfless and idealistic values typically associated with the popular portrait of the family. On the contrary, he celebrates the "selfish and materialistic, inward-looking" nature of the institution. Passion, pride, possessiveness, jealousy, narcissism, competition, acquisitiveness—the typical roster of anti-family values—are all encompassed by Mount's depiction of family life as an invigoratingly strenuous emotional endeavor that makes "other experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant, seem a little tame and bloodless."

Invoking somewhat more conventionally flattering virtues, he also champions the family as "a *voluntary* arrangement which derives its virtue from the exercise of free choice." Mount wants to proclaim equality as the family's guiding aspiration, which not surprisingly lends a wishful tone to his treatment of women, whose historical subordination he skirts by emphasizing struggling partnership rather than oppression. It also leads to a rather romantic view of divorce and illegitimacy, which he defends as a tribute to a "higher" understanding of marriage, evidence that individuals hold out for personal satisfaction rather than being swayed by practical convenience.

There is plainly more than a little anachronism in Mount's defiant celebration of selfish individualism and free choice—as if their scarcity were the problem in our society. And yet he's right, such traits do tend to get lost within the standard moralizing view of the family. In fact, they're often invoked as threats to it: that's what Quayle tried to do. Mount's revised view is much less defensive, and suggests that the alternative to piety about the nuclear family doesn't have to be earnest neutrality about all variations on it. His enthusiastic, unruly portrait of the two-parent family enterprise is a reminder that life on the bourgeois homefront isn't simply self-sacrificial duty, to be viewed as either onerous or virtuous. Even the underlying power relations are more mutually rewarding than is usually advertised. While parents complain about being their young children's slaves, they rarely admit one compensation: they are, however fleetingly, also gods in their children's eyes. If much of family life is not fulfilling in the most elevated terms, plenty of it is satisfying in some of the most immediate and time-bound ways.

As the title and "Father Knows Best"-style photograph on the cover of Coontz's book announce, she is an expert who has come to liberate American families from their nostalgia about the institution. She especially wants to dull the glow that surrounds one powerful image of it: the enclosed nuclear family of breadwinning dad, nurturing mom and well-scrubbed kids featured on T.V. sitcoms of the 1950s.

Such skepticism is not, on its face, very daring by now. Anti-nostalgia about the '50s family has become a growth industry in this country. The "inner-child" wing of the "recovery" movement has turned many of its baby boomer adherents into bitter historians of their own family lives in the supposedly idyllic decade. Still, Coontz has a useful reminder for these "adult children" and others: that the '50s family was not the deeply entrenched monolith it is assumed to have been. She goes too far in her revisionist eagerness to claim that it is the historical exception rather than the rule; at times she conveys an impression that all of nuclear family living is merely a misguided experiment that has briefly interrupted a long pattern of rich communal harmony.

Yet even though her own perspective isn't as unillusioned as she thinks, Coontz does embark in an interesting direction when she challenges one assumption about the nuclear family in particular: that it has long been proudly self-sufficient, largely unresponsive to public pressures and incentives. Focusing on two prototypes renowned in different ways for autonomy and privacy, the frontier family and the '50s suburban household, she enumerates the wide variety of federal subsidies and projects

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that encouraged their ways of life. And she proceeds to the overarching argument that the rise of a strong interventionist state and the rise of a strong—that is, increasingly private and mother-centered—family were closely intertwined. She shows how judicial activism in the nineteenth century and protective legislation along with state regulation in the twentieth helped to consolidate an ever narrower, more strictly middle-class conception of the nuclear family set apart from the larger public world.

Coontz intends her exposé as a jarring blow to simple popular notions about the family's self-reliance. But in fact it is she who succumbs to an easy assumption of the opposite—individual powerlessness. The truth is, families aren't under very many illusions about their freedom from external social and economic pressures, but they are hardly the passive victims of them that Coontz tends to portray. People were not blindly steered to the suburbs by new federally subsidized loans and an expanded highway system; they aspired to leave the city and their hopes became more feasible. Laura Ingalls Wilder's daughter may well have revised the *Little House on the Prairie* books to emphasize heroic independence and downplay government and community support, as Coontz points out, but clearly frontier life was not a centrally planned drama of dependence.

Yet Coontz's history of consistent public support for a highly privatized version of nuclear family life is a blow to the notion that the expert, governmental approach family structure is studiously relativist—or worse, that by aiding non-intact families, it is in practice biased against standard nuclear arrangements. Coontz's argument is that government has played a much more active, ideological role, and that it has served the opposite end: the consolidation of a nuclear family with a wife and mother at home.

She is so disenchanted by the results that she is disinclined to pursue some of the more pertinent implications of her revisionist perspective. Instead, she invokes her own brand of nostalgia: for an enriching web of community that once existed and can again. But two-parent families are still very much with us, groping their way toward a less homogenous mother-at-home form that she might be expected to welcome; what's more, her own argument suggests that formative policies might be of some help in the process. If in the past government subsidies all too successfully encouraged a division between the public and private spheres, there is good reason to explore their potential, however marginal, to help ease the new tensions that working couples and their children face in integrating jobs and kids.

By the same token, Coontz's faith in formative policy implies an indictment of a government program that she barely mentions: welfare, which her own analysis would have to credit as a major cause of a culture of broken families and dependent women. AFDC as it has been structured perpetuates precisely the same pattern among the poorest single mothers that she has accused different federal policies of having fostered among middle-class married women: it rewards them for having children and not working.

As Valerie Polakow complains in *Lives on the Edge*, which is most valuable for its firsthand portraits of struggling single mothers and their children, "welfare expenditure funneled to AFDC has not transcended the norm of an unskilled, untrained mother, to be supported by her husband"—except there almost never is a husband. The emergence of the two working-parent family norm puts the notion of one parent at home full-time in a new light: that arrangement has become a luxury, for society and for families—a desirable option, certainly during infancy and toddlerhood, but not a right or a requirement. Where the expectation that poor mothers would work was once considered punitive, it is now the stipulation that they stay home that looks oppressive, unfair or at least old-fashioned.

From opposite perspectives, Mount and Coontz unwittingly present historical evidence of just how capacious a standard the nuclear family really is. In defending the longevity of the most basic vision of the nuclear household as an affectionate couple with children, Mount acts as if such a tradition established a fixed ideal; in fact, the broadness of the family model only emphasizes how much room for variation in expectations and particular setups has existed within it over the centuries. Coontz confirms the heterogeneity in her survey of the variations in America, only to forget it in her zeal to reject one of these variations, the narrow 1950s nuclear family model, as if it served to discredit the two-parent structure at its core.

A common theme circumscribes their treatments of the family, neither of which directly deals with the new two-income version. Each overstates the essentially private nature of the nuclear arrangement, Mount celebrating it as liberating and Coontz denouncing it as oppressive. Mount's stark opposition

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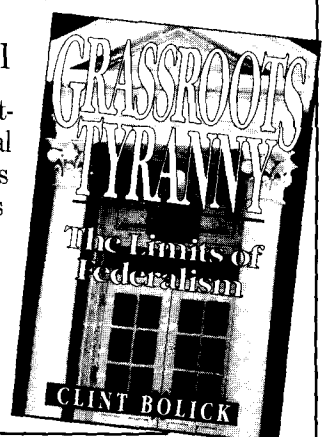

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between a voluntary private sphere and a coercive public one, never very tenable, has become even less so with the rise of maternal employment. Toward the end of his book he himself is forced to acknowledge that the membrane between family and society is in fact permeable, and even to welcome it: "We may hope and expect that ... the spirit of civic equality may seep through into the private world of marriage and blot out the patches of inequality and consequent resentment that disfigure it."

Coontz implicitly hopes for much more than seepage—for a flood of civic equality and community that would all but drown that private world. In the vision of seamless interpenetration between the personal and the social that underlies her history, any real interest in the private power and importance of marriage and childrearing tends to fade away. It all but disappears, as Mount observes, in the more doctrinaire feminist history, with its emphasis on women as mere victims, and of motherhood as mere subjugation. Who needs privacy if it is synonymous with oppression? But the impatient dismissal of the intimate realm is also, as few have pointed out before now, encouraged by silence on the subject of fathers, whose role in the private sphere is rarely explored.

III.

For different reasons, both the old-style "patriarchal" history and the newer feminist-influenced scrutiny of parenthood have until very recently paid fathers little mind. In the narratives that have dwelled on conventional family portraits, fathers have been the distant protectors taken for granted in the background. In the more recent work that focuses on divergences from the standard pattern, fathers have been either distant oppressors or altogether gone. Coontz barely bothers to consider fathers' shifting position within, as opposed to outside, the family.

Now, thanks to the newly self-conscious emphasis on the two-parent family, in particular the two working-parent family, fathers are suddenly a pressing and promising subject. After all, the endless debates about what single mothers can and can't provide their children, and about what working mothers do and don't provide, are never going to be neatly resolved. But there is a new readiness to acknowledge that something is missing, and this means shifting the focus to fathers.

One easy conclusion immediately emerges. Everybody agrees that absent fathers should provide money. Single-parent families are six times as likely to be poor as two-parent families, and only a small proportion of them can count on regular, significant contributions from fathers. Efforts to enforce child support more strictly and more widely, which entail identifying the "deadbeat" fathers of illegitimate children, are universally popular.

The two-income family also raises the stickier matter of paternal nurturance, not just finance. Mount makes a typically cheering foray into the field, proclaiming the timelessness of the touchy-feely father with an excerpt from the *Memoirs* of Giovanni Morelli (1398-1421):

> I called to mind when, the exact hour and moment, and where and how he was conceived by me, and how great a joy it was to me and his mother; and soon came his movements in the womb which I noted carefully with my hand, awaiting his birth with the greatest eagerness. And then when he was born, male, sound, well-proportioned, what happiness, what joy I experienced.

But his other favorite father, Montaigne, complicates the picture by confirming the alternate, still lingering paternal profile: the man who steers clear of the clamorous needs of the smallest children, joining in only when more challenging choices are at stake. In "The Affection of Fathers for Their Children," Montaigne confesses:

> I cannot entertain that passion for caressing newborn infants, that have neither mental activities nor recognizable bodily shape by which to make themselves lovable; and I have never willingly suffered them to be fed in my presence.
>
> A true and regular affection should spring up and increase with our growing knowledge of them. Then if they are deserving of it, our natural inclination keeping up with our reason, we shall cherish them with a truly paternal regard.

The historical quest for sensitive alternatives to the '50s-style hands-off paterfamilias proves hard for anyone to resist. The dangers of too rhetorically, and readily, seizing on hoary exemplars out of context are clear in Mary Frances Berry's *The Politics of Parenthood*. Taking a sweepingly prescriptive approach, she argues that paternal duties must be redefined, because the imperative of women's rights collides with prevailing views about childrearing. "The issue of child care," she says bluntly, "is really an issue of power, resources and control among adults; it is not a battle over who is more suited to care."

A small portion of her book is devoted to arguing, by way of facile historical allusion, that what she means is that fathers are just as suited to child care as mothers. Berry, now a history professor (formerly an assistant secretary in Carter's HEW and a champion of the ERA), dusts off a paternal precedent two centuries old, which she then elevates as a tradition of "father care" that is ripe to be revived: many fathers up until the early nineteenth century, she reminds us, supervised their children's upbringing, especially their education. She's unconcerned about the difference in social and economic circumstances then and now, and also apparently untroubled by one telltale blemish in many of those early scenes of manly nurturance: the crucial presence of servants. Far from corralling a roll-up-the-sleeves, sharing and caring father, she resurrects a male prerogative that threatens to consign mothers even further to the margins.

The truth is that Berry is not really very interested in the nature and quality of paternal involvement. The bulk of her book confirms a rather stark message from the former activist: in the all-important battle between the sexes about rights, the priority is not so much care that's suitable for kids as care that suits parents. To judge by the therapeutic exhortations that she is finally reduced to, her standards are low. The showcase cure she peddles, for dads especially, is her upbeat history lesson about great American fathers, from Increase Mather to Aaron Burr. But just in case, she also urges "parenting and child care courses in middle school," particularly for boys; and she proposes the pat counsel, clearly aimed above all at women, that "using nonrelative caregivers who have been screened carefully to make sure they are responsible is no reason to feel guilty." In the end she herself plainly doesn't put much faith in fathers—or in mothers, or in children, for that matter.

Unlike Berry's exemplary lessons from two centuries ago, Robert L. Griswold's much more thorough descriptive survey in *Fatherhood in America* of roughly one-and-a-half centuries of agonizing over the paternal role in the nuclear family offers a more honestly mixed message about antecedents. In one sense it's an unfamiliar and encouraging story about the past, since it complicates stereotypes of unintrospective and contentedly detached fathers. Griswold uncovers widespread worry over paternal alienation in more "traditional" nuclear families, from recently arrived immigrant clans to middle-class homes. To be sure, as he recounts, the aloofness has often contributed to family dissolution. But it has also inspired recurrent

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efforts, encouraged by childrearing experts and pursued by fathers, to cultivate more intimate bonds with children.

From the contemporary perspective, with its focus on men and intimacy, the story of those efforts sounds more familiar. To that extent it is less encouraging about the prospects for dramatically greater flexibility and fulfillment in the revised nuclear family. Much of what now gets billed as pathbreaking sensitivity is not all that new and has never been all that deep. There are not only plenty of confusions still facing fathers, but also similar structural tensions now confronting working mothers.

Central to Griswold's account is the fate of the "new fatherhood," the middle-class ideal of paternal empathy and involvement that first emerged in the '20s and '30s and that has ebbed and flowed ever since. He treats it as an earnest response to real imbalances within the mother-at-home-style family, but he also emphasizes that in few of its guises has it ever evolved much beyond a superficial therapeutic perspective. And among the many obstacles that have stood in the way of a truly well-rounded paternal role, it's no surprise that work outside the home has loomed the largest—and now looms for women as well. For work demands, among other things, precisely what children demand: parental time.

As Griswold observes, feminism and women's rising work force participation have helped to erode the old gender division between "quality" time—the kind that fathers were famous for intermittently bestowing—and plain quantity time, the kind that at-home mothers were rarely celebrated for providing steadily. The recent "more political incarnation of the new fatherhood ... challenged men to share equally the nurture and daily care of their offspring ... to become more than after-hour buddies and playmates and to take on the less appealing aspects of child care." That doesn't and shouldn't mean an erosion of distinctions between "fathering" and "mothering," though much of the self-scrutiny inspired by the men's movement, like much women's movement consciousness-raising before it, inclines in that blurry direction. The best check on vacuous theorizing about male nurturance is the plain old practice of it, for which there is now ample opportunity in two-income families—real, rather than self-consciously manufactured, demand for a father ready to take his turn tending the kids, without a hovering mother criticizing his technique.

In the face of that demand, fatherhood has been polarized more starkly than perhaps ever before—at a time when the predicaments of mothers, single and married, seem to be converging in the common experience of working motherhood. At one extreme, fathers who live with their families are more routinely pitching in, and in concrete ways. At the opposite extreme, a daunting number of other fathers occupy an ever more peripheral position as illegitimate births continue to rise, if now more slowly than during the '70s and '80s; among black families, two-thirds of all babies are born to unmarried mothers.

It is an inauspicious division, but it has proved a rhetorically galvanizing one in the current family crisis. Not so surprisingly perhaps, the surge in diaper-changing dads, among family experts and ordinary parents alike, has helped fuel the zeal for targeting deadbeat dads. (You won't find Hollywood glamorizing one of *them*.) Yet those cooperative fathers should be the first to recognize that more rigorous child support is likely to be a drop in the bucket rather than a dramatic cure. Of course it's more popular politically to talk about collecting money from irresponsibly independent fathers than it is to talk about disbursing welfare or jobs to dependent mothers. But the truth is that in many of the neediest cases there isn't much money to extract from absent fathers, certainly not from regular paychecks distributed by identifiable employers. In any case, a meager monthly support payment isn't what most children really need. They want fathers, as they'll tell you if they're old enough, or show if they're not. (On visiting day care centers, one journalist has said that he can immediately pick out the kids without fathers from the eager way they look at him.)

As for the prospects of the nurturing breed of fathers, their participation on the homefront is not yet close to equal, and the evolution of their roles is hardly guaranteed to be speedy. For them the real test may well be a matter of money. When working women's incomes and career paths begin to reach parity with theirs, will they be prepared to consider making the kind of "daddy-track" choices that beckon as one of the better ways to manage two-income family life—cut back temporarily to part-time work, even take some time off, during their children's preschool years? With two parents ready to be flexible in a typical family with two children close in age, juggling work to allow more parental time at home should, in theory, begin to sound like a comparatively short-lived and manageable feat.

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But it also can't help sounding a little utopian, premised on a rare specimen of empathetic, accommodating fatherhood who is nonetheless still ambitious and manly. Sixty-six years ago, in an article called "The Feminist's Husband" in THE NEW REPUBLIC, a writer and mother named Diana Freeman surveyed the varieties of enlightened manhood and sounded on balance pessimistic:

> I look around at the husbands of my feminist friends. Some seem to be proud of their shining, successful wives. Others have so far fallen into the new cult that they feel aggrieved if their wives drop back into traditional ways. But others are visibly losing ground.

She meant that they were drifting, unmoored by women's growing independence and drive to have it all during feminism's first stage. Twenty years of much more pervasive change for women (and for the economy) lie behind the current transformation of the family, but the next twenty years of its evolution are likely to turn more on men's attitudes and actions. The mood, as Robert Griswold suggests in closing, is again marked by disorientation. Continued resistance is to be expected, but so is continued resilience—and both are bound to be unsettling; proof for mothers, fathers and children alike that, as Freeman concluded, "freedom is not won by mere transfer of power."

That is surely one lesson the family excels in teaching: that neither freedom nor fairness is painlessly fostered. Messy domestic life drums in just how elusive both goals can be, a recognition that should unsettle the facile predictions about the family that proliferate whenever a crisis rolls around. The basic nuclear family is not a liberating institution, but neither, history reveals, is it a brittle or limiting one. Alternatives to it have always existed as a reality. They have never beckoned for long as a competing ideal. •

Sleepless in Seattle

BY JONATHAN RABAN

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(Gold Leaf Press, 147 pp., $14.95)

A yearning for elsewhere, for a life beyond the life we're leading, is universal, but America is unique in giving the idea a specific geographical location in the West—though the West is a slippery and mobile entity. When Miles Coverdale goes to Blithedale to try the "life of Paradise anew," he has only to ride one day's journey inland from the smoky city (Boston); but Hawthorne crowds that day with topographical and meteorological incident, laying on a snowstorm and a tempest and depopulating the countryside, so that by nightfall Coverdale is able to reflect, "I felt that ... we had transported ourselves a worldwide distance from the system of society that shackled us at breakfast-time." Blithedale, like its model, Brook Farm (in West Roxbury), may have a Massachusetts zip code, but it is located in spirit in that far West of the American imagination where all utopias belong.

Now that California is elsewhere no longer, its problems as insistently *here* as those of Roxbury itself, the utopian burden has been taken up by the states to the north—Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana—where population density is lighter and the impact of recession has been less. The Pacific Northwest, with its dramatic and metaphysical geography of mountains, forest, desert, ocean coast and inland sea, is still, just, West in the old sense; a worthwhile, if not a worldwide, distance from breakfast-time society.

Recent arrivals, like J. Z. Knight, who channels the spirit of Ramtha, the hedonistic 35,000-year-old sage from Atlantis ("I give you the strength to find joy"), on her New Age ranch at Yelm, near Tacoma, Washington, have fitted easily into the region. Yelm is just another dot on a map already thickly spotted with the names of old utopian communities and with schemes of salvation and revelation. Already Yelm has shown signs of following its predecessors down the dusty Brook Farm road of dissension and breakup. Shirley MacLaine and Company have packed their bags and the Knights are now divorced (after an extensive hearing on the daytime T.V. circuit), but Knight goes on filling the 1,000-seat arena at Yelm for "dialogues" with her old man of the sea.

On the far side of the Puget Sound from Tacoma lies Home, a turn-of-the-century utopia where "the kingdom of heaven," in secular lower case, was to be established within the liberated self. Home was founded in 1896 on a wooded inlet-within-an-inlet named Joe's Bay on the Key Peninsula. It grew out of Glennis, a bankrupt utopia thirty miles south of Tacoma, and was based on a merry conglomeration of principles, including single-taxism, anti-clericalism, anarchism, socialism, nudism and free love. By the time people reached Home (most came from the East Coast, some from Europe), they were well to the west of conventional radical thought, and the place became a famous shelter for all sorts of very far-Western doctrines. Several members were known as Koreshans, holding that the accepted view of the world was inside-out and that the Earth was not a globe but the interior surface of a sphere.

The community produced a succession of newspapers and magazines. Its first regular publication was *Discontent: Mother of Progress*, in one of whose early issues the laureate of Home, C. L. Penhallow, set out the somewhat spongy ethos of the place in a poem titled "Joe's Bay":

> I there a promise feel,
> That in a future great,
> I'll find a realm that's truly free
> From taint of church or state.
>
> Where each will live for all;
> Where all will live for each;
> And in an atmosphere of love,
> They'll practice what they preach.

Interestingly, the poem itself is profoundly colored by the taint of church that it tries to disavow: the literary tradition of C. L. Penhallow can be found in its entirety in the Methodist hymnal. Home—which was proud of having no church within its precincts—was at heart a congregation of staunch non-conformists bent on turning the Sunday school picnic into a permanent way of life.

Syndicated articles by—and home-grown articles about—Emma Goldman were a staple feature of *Discontent*, and when Goldman was on a swing of the Western states in 1898, she was talked into making a last-minute appearance at Home. (She came again in 1899.) The colonists were thrilled by her ("a jolly comrade, a good looking, sensible girl, who is even not averse to a little flirtation"), though she found them to be a bunch of happy cranks, too lightweight for her large designs on the world. They showed her their asparagus plots and their poems; then they went skinny-dipping. Goldman said Home was "the anarchist graveyard."

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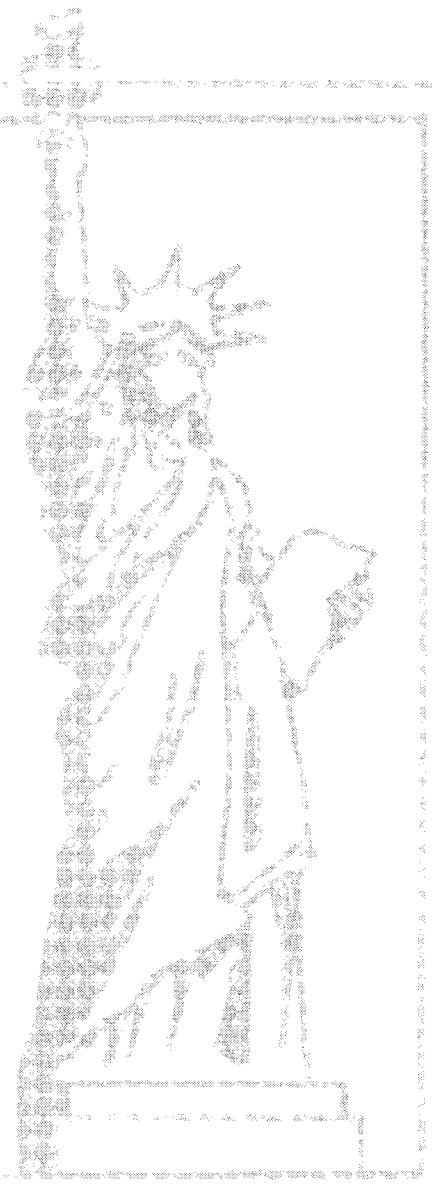

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What now remains of Home are the swelling rhododendrons, the colonists' gnarled apple trees and bird-haunted spaces between houses—the square one-acre plots, the perfect balance between communitarian neighborliness and deep country isolation. The last relic of communal ownership is the broad village beach, on which no houses directly abut. Home slowly evolved from utopia to suburb, with the last of the founding anarchists surviving into the 1950s. Heaven on earth became a dormitory suburb of Tacoma that reminds the passer-by of how utopian was the original suburban urge; it has turned out to be not so much the graveyard of anarchism as the nursery of the upper-middle-class planned community.

The Pacific Northwest continues to be a magnet—the strongest regional magnet in the country, I would guess—for hopefuls and new-lifers of every imaginable cast. It feels like the last surviving corner of the United States to be widely promoted, in Blithedale terms, as "the one green spot in the moral sand-waste of the world." People like to think of themselves as undergoing not mere relocation but full-blown resurrection here in the smoke-and cholesterol-free city of Seattle, where eternal life is thought to be a viable alternative to two packs a day. In the enlightened Northwest the recycling and saving of things (water, owls, paper sacks, whales, urban neighborhoods) elides imperceptibly into the salvation of the self. (The Self section in bookstores here is impressively larger than the History section.) In this far-Western stronghold of the second chance, second family and second career, it's easy to find yourself beset by the thought that you have somehow passed over and entered the afterlife.

Embraced by the Light is an unusual travel book by Betty J. Eadie, a Seattle woman, in which she describes her journey to heaven and what she saw there. It has been steadily climbing *The New York Times*'s non-fiction best-seller list for the last several weeks, and its paperback rights were recently sold to Bantam Books for "more than $1.5 million," according to a *Times* report. The same report also carried a brief interview with Bantam's president, Irwyn Applebaum, who praised the book for being "remarkably affecting and thorough."

It is a pity that Curtis Taylor, Eadie's co-worker on the book (in this context one hesitates to call him a ghost), has licked her prose into professional shape and has given it a style of machine-turned simplesse that fails to do justice to the very personal nature of the experience reported here. For even before her death and brief ascension, Betty Eadie had a story worth telling—a Western story, in the footloose, hardscrabble Raymond Carver mold. *Embraced by the Light* gives one the facts of it but not the voice it needs to come alive.

She was born in Nebraska in 1942, the seventh of ten children. Her mother was a Sioux Indian, her father a "Scotch-Irishman." She was 4 when her parents separated and she was posted off to a Catholic boarding school, where the nuns were brutal and where she nearly died of whooping cough and double pneumonia ("I found myself in someone's arms. I looked up and saw a man with a beautiful white beard looking at me."). She met kindlier treatment on the Rosebud Indian reservation in South Dakota, where she was cared for by Wesleyan Methodist missionaries. At 15, she quit school and married. At 21, she was divorced with three children (a fourth died in infancy).

Her second life began in Reno, Nevada, where she met Joe Eadie, an Air Force technician who was himself recently divorced. (These bones are very bare. What was she doing in Reno? Living on welfare? Waiting on tables? Had she gone there to get her divorce? We're not told.) Joe and Betty married ("From the beginning it seemed almost too good to be true") and moved on to San Antonio, Texas, where the Air Force put him in training as a computer operator. Two more children were born in Texas. "We were living a dream come true ... but still, I knew that something was missing." She was 25 when Joe retired from the Air Force in 1967, and they and their five children, soon to be six, embarked on life number three:

> [Joe's] training qualified him to begin a new career just about anywhere he wanted. All we had to decide was which side of the country we wanted to live on. We finally chose to move to the Pacific Northwest, where Joe would take a position at a large aerospace corporation. We felt that the climate would be a welcome contrast to the hot, dry weather we had become accustomed to in Texas.

Rosebud to Reno, Reno to San Antonio, San Antonio to Seattle ... these are mighty hops; comparable, where I come from, to flitting from London to Marrakesh, Paris to Moscow or Rome to Damascus. Betty Eadie describes a lightly rooted, quintessentially Western American life, in which the great distances she travels help to underscore the enormous, empty gulfs between scenes of Dickensian deprivation and reports of dreams come true. Journeys themselves turn into a kind of narrative explanation: How do you get from servitude to bliss? You take the road from Rapid City to Reno, via Rock Springs and Salt Lake City. How do you signal a change in your life, perform a rite of passage? You hit I-10 west out of San Antonio. (I wish we knew more about that journey—the make and vintage of the car, if it was done by car; the behavior of the children, all under the age of 10; the motels stopped at; the flat tire in New Mexico—and would be sorry to discover that it was made by plane, tickets courtesy of Boeing.)

It seems inevitable that such a life should have come to rest in Seattle (there is nowhere further west to go) in the hilly, arboreal suburb of White Center, where several thousand Boeing workers live within spitting distance of the aircraft plant. White Center's undulating avenues, lined with shingled houses set on tidy plots, along with the march of Pacific rain clouds overhead, must have seemed a world and more away from the miseries of Betty Eadie's childhood on the edge of the Badlands. Settled in Seattle, she took home study courses to make up for her lost years of high school—tough going for a mother of six, about to turn 30.

In November 1973, when she was 31, Eadie had a partial hysterectomy in a Seattle hospital. Sometime during the night that followed, she died, and began her longest journey yet, to that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler ordinarily returns:

> I felt a terrible sinking sensation, like the very last drops of blood were being drained from me. I heard a soft buzzing sound in my head and continued to sink until I felt my body become still and lifeless.
>
> Then I felt a surge of energy. It was almost as if I felt a pop or release inside me, and my spirit was suddenly drawn out through my chest and pulled upward, as if by a giant magnet. My first impression was that I was free. There was nothing unnatural about the experience. I was above the bed, hovering near the ceiling...

After a short surveillance of her own dead body, she was off on a rapid power glide ("I was only vaguely aware of trees rushing by below me") to her home suburb, where she saw her husband "sitting in his favorite armchair reading the newspaper" and two of her children engaged in a pillow fight. She flew, or was flown (the pleasurable passivity of post-mortal travel is given repeated emphasis here) back to her hospital room, from which she made a non-stop supersonic ascent into heaven.

It was a night flight. The noise on takeoff ("a deep rumbling, rushing sound") was terrific, but quickly diminished as altitude was gained. Eadie was made to feel luxuriously comfortable:

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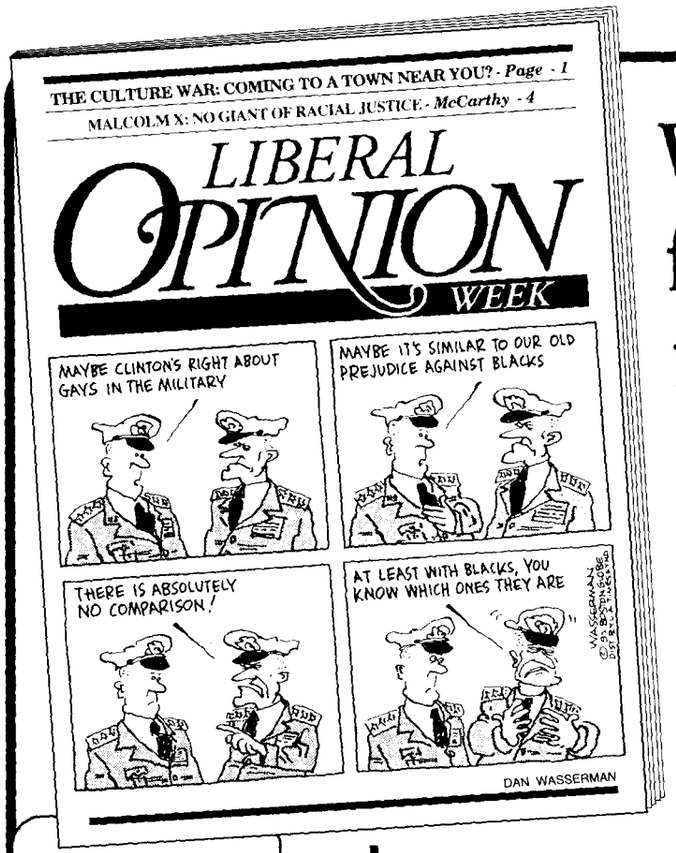
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> I was in a reclining position, moving feet first, head slightly raised. The speed became so incredible that I felt that light years could not measure it. But the peace and tranquillity also increased, and I felt that I could have stayed in this wonderful state forever.

She entered heaven through a dark tunnel with a brilliant light at its end. At the celestial terminal, Christ was waiting for her. While admiring his magnificent halo (gold paling to incandescent white), Eadie noticed that she had acquired a halo of her own, though hers was of much humbler wattage.

In an understandably breathless sequence, she describes how Christ gave her a crash course in universal cosmology and the meaning of life. ("As more questions bubbled out of me, I became aware of his sense of humor. Almost laughing, he suggested that I slow down.") Under divine tutelage, the answers to all her questions came whizzing at her, as if by magic: "The word 'omniscient' had never been more meaningful to me. Knowledge permeated me. In a sense it *became* me, and I was amazed at my ability to comprehend the mysteries of the universe simply by reflecting on them."

She comes into possession of a teleology that owes something to Plato and even more to Emerson (an ever present influence on American religious thought, from Mrs. Eddy to Mrs. Eadie). Christ explains the relation between heaven and earth in a nicely up-to-date simile: "I was told by the Savior that the spirit creation could be compared to one of our photographic prints; the spirit creation would be like a sharp, brilliant print, and the earth would be like its dark negative." Here I do wonder if perhaps Eadie hasn't gotten the analogy the wrong way around: the idea that heaven is a print made from the negative of earth rings with a truth that I cannot believe she quite intends.

In her state of omniscience, the whole of human history is unfolded before her. She watches as the world is created and "our spiritual brothers and sisters" take their turns at incarnation. Every child born is a spiritual being, dispatched to earth on a divine mission. (*Roe* v. *Wade* puts all Heaven in a rage.) She witnesses a sort of living-hologram-cavalcade of great events; significantly, she is particularly interested in seeing the settlement of the West:

> I distinctly remember watching the American pioneers crossing the continent and rejoicing as they endured their difficult tasks and completed their mission. I knew that only those who needed that experience were placed there.

Though Eadie's descriptions of her ascension and her interview with Christ may tax the reader's credulity, what follows is in a more comfortable and familiar genre. On a guided tour of the world above, she proves herself to be a seasoned and unflappable traveler, with an eye for heavenly architecture ("buildings are perfect there"; they have translucent walls of "very thin marble"), fashion ("soft pastel gowns") and the wonders of nature. She is tactfully curious about politics and industry. She visits a factory where a strange fabric ("like a mixture of spun glass and spun sugar") is manufactured on hand looms, and stops at the celestial equivalent of the Pentagon, from where warrior angels ("giant men, very muscularly built, with a wonderful countenance about them") are sent out on covert operations against the legions of Satan.

Her tone here is matter-of-fact to the point of being blasé. She has knocked about the enormous and variegated spaces of the West, has lived in Nebraska, South Dakota, Nevada, Texas and Washington; Heaven presents itself as one more state on her life's itinerary. (A double meaning lurks in her discovery that "when we 'die'... we experience nothing more than a transition to another state.") Nor is it surprising that she seems to be so at home there, for Heaven, as it turns out, is much like western Washington. Any Seattle resident would feel at ease in this landscape of "mountains, spectacular valleys and rivers in the distance," where the grass is "crisp, cool and brilliant green." The river that flows through the garden at Heaven's center is "fed by a large cascading waterfall of the purest water ... a melody of majestic beauty carried from the waterfall and filled the garden." The Seattle resident will be put in mind of Snoqualmie Falls on the western flank of the Cascades, a favorite Sunday brunch destination. (These are the falls that used to figure in the "Twin Peaks" credits.)

Heaven, like Seattle, is in the forefront of advanced information technology. Besides the quaint hand-loom weavers (themselves well represented in western Washington), there are computer hackers; angels who "enjoy creating devices that are helpful to others—both here and there. I saw a large machine, similar to a computer, but much more powerful. The people working on this too were pleased to show me their work." Eadie is given a taste of what the hackers are up to when she is taken to "a large room similar to a library":

> It seemed to be a repository of knowledge, but I couldn't see any books. Then I noticed ideas coming into my mind, knowledge filling me on subjects that I had not thought about for some time—or in some cases not at all. Then I realized that this was a library of the mind. By simply reflecting on a topic ... all knowledge came to me.

This sounds much like a system now under development at Bill Gates's Microsoft Corporation, where it goes under the code name Cairo; though Microsoft's sublunary version, running a generation or two behind the heavenly model, will still require the user to be seated at a terminal.

As Eadie travels through Heaven ("I could do whatever I wanted, go wherever I desired, go fast—incredibly fast—or go slow. I loved the freedom"), her book grows to resemble one of the guides for prospective immigrants to the Pacific Northwest that were put out by the railroad companies between about 1880 and 1930. There is the same boosting of landscape and lifestyle, the same chatty and informal peeking at the major industries in which the immigrant is likely to find work. The authors of the railroad guides habitually reached for the language of supernatural revelation to convey the marvels of the region: "Picture your own ideal of a place to live on this earth.... On the horizon of the Pacific Northwest men with vision read, in letters of fire, a single word—Opportunity" (from *The Land of Opportunity Now*, 1924). Or as Eadie says of Heaven: "Plans, paths and truths await us there." All aboard!

Embraced by the Light is a Western production in every sense. Gold Leaf Press of Placerville, California, was set up by a Sundance, Utah, businessman for the express purpose of publishing Eadie, and the main bulk of the book's sales has been in the far West—in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah and California. (590,000 copies are in print; about half that number have been sold so far.) It has been a triumph of regional word-of-mouth, with no reviews to speak of and with powerful Christian bookstores handling the book gingerly or not at all. Eadie has taken to the road, drawing large crowds in small towns, and the book has been promoted on back-country F.M. stations. It has been walking on winged feet from the chain bookstores in the malls.

As I write, Eadie has just shouldered her way past Bill Moyers on the *Times* list and is now within hailing distance of Rush Limbaugh. Yet the disconcerting rise and rise of *Embraced by the Light* cannot simply be put down to the novelty of the adventure. Eadie is by no means the Columbus or Marco Polo of the afterlife: accounts of post-mortem flights to Elysium are such standard stock items in New Age bookstores (which themselves

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lean to distant-travel names such as Quest and Odyssey) that they are known wearily in the trade as "ascension material."

It's the homely and well-trodden aspect of the book that marks it out—the seven-children-at-age-30, the rootless pilgrimaging across the states, the succession of fresh starts. The Taylor-Eadie prose style, tepid and banal, works to the book's advantage here. It is so unparticular that this life might belong to almost anyone who's trailed a string of kids around a supermarket in an unfamiliar town.

On her zigzag trek from Nebraska to Seattle, Betty Eadie covered what still remains of the crumbling Manifest Destiny trail. Now—and for a largely Western audience—she brings back a report on a territory of unlimited travel across vast spaces, romantic scenery, fertile soil and full employment . . . that old story of the far West that has always really been a tale of the hereafter. It's in the dictionary: "Go west . . . a) to be lost or destroyed irrevocably; b) to die."

JONATHAN RABAN's most recent book is *Hunting Mister Heartbreak* (Harper Perennial).

Rebel With a Cause

BY DAVID THOMSON

Nicholas Ray: An American Journey by Bernard Eisenschitz translated from the French by Tom Milne

(Faber & Faber, 599 pp., $24.95)

I Was Interrupted: Nicholas Ray on Making Movies edited and introduced by Susan Ray

(University of California Press, 290 pp., $25)

Can Nicholas Ray ever be haunting again? Will the world discover his films anew? Do we want to reclaim the golden age in which he was such a ferment of confusions, such a beguiling monster, such a brave, scary mess? When the literary editor of this journal asked me to write about Ray, he admitted, "It's a great subject, but it's slipping slightly into the Mists of Time." At that moment I happened to be in England buying a copy of Bernard Eisenschitz's biography, which is long, scholarly and dry, and uncomfortable with the melodrama of Ray's life. It appeared in France in 1990, and has just been published by Faber & Faber, which has the most enterprising list of film books in the English language. The British publisher is making the biography available in America, but only because the book never found an American publisher. Fourteen years after his death, America still seems unsure whether Ray mattered, whether he even existed.

In the 1950s, during Ray's brief glory, Jean-Luc Godard said of him, "After seeing *Johnny Guitar* and *Rebel Without a Cause*, one cannot but feel that here is something which exists only in the cinema, which would be nothing in a novel, the stage or anywhere else, but which becomes fantastically beautiful on the screen." Today, of course, not many of us know for sure whether Godard is alive, let alone working. And very few comprehend what it means for a movie to be "fantastically beautiful." Rethinking Ray is rather like performing an autopsy on old enthusiasms. It is also a way of measuring how much passion has gone out of pictures, for their makers and their viewers alike. Television and the VCR have taught us not to live for looking, or for plastic energy. Movies are sinking into stylelessness. They are becoming mere illustration. If he were alive, Nicholas Ray might prowl about with patches on both his eyes, holding the imagery in his head, howling like Lear.

Raymond Nicholas Kienzle was born in 1911, the son of a lapsed German Catholic and a Norwegian woman, near La Crosse, Wisconsin. His father was a builder who died when his son was only 16 . He was also an alcoholic who had lovers; and Nick, too, was a drunk as a kid, and once made a pass at his father's mistress. The young Kienzle was tall, grave and handsome, and he was cherished by his mother and his five sisters.

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He went to the University of Chicago, but quickly dropped out. A couple of years later he joined Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin West, but that ended badly too, with Wright accusing Ray of (among other things) homosexuality.

Years later the producer John Houseman, one of Ray's best and abiding friends, would write of him:

> Reared in Wisconsin in a household dominated by women, he was a potential homosexual with a deep, passionate and constant need for female love in his life. This made him attractive to women, for whom the chance to save him from his own self-destructive habits proved an irresistible attraction, of which Nick took full advantage and for which he rarely forgave them. He left a trail of damaged lives behind him—not as a seducer, but as a husband, lover and father.

That one paragraph by Houseman (from *Front & Center*, published just before Ray's death) is more penetrating and suggestive than anything Eisenschitz dares. A one-time member of the editorial board of *Cahiers du Cinema*, Eisenschitz wants to regard Ray as the maker of remarkable films. And Ray needs such a defense. The problem is that biography calls for more depth of understanding, and Ray's films are less potent if one overlooks their self-reference. Houseman's estimate of the life, or of its potential, is a stimulating commentary on, say, the relations between James Dean and Sal Mineo in *Rebel Without a Cause*, or Curt Jurgens and Richard Burton in *Bitter Victory*, to say nothing of the longings and betrayals between men and women in Ray's films.

The best writing in the two books under review comes in Susan Ray's introduction to *I Was Interrupted*. She was his fourth wife, and his companion up until his death. Forty years his junior, she was another University of Chicago student all too ready to drop out, and susceptible to the rogue maestro whom she met in Chicago in 1969 as he tried to make a film about the trial of the Chicago Seven. He had wild white hair and a pirate's black eye patch—"his auric field spread out to the walls and crackled with high-voltage charge." She fell for him, but "I knew early on that he was monstrous." By this stage of his life, Ray was, variously, a drunk, a junkie, a gambler and—most profoundly of all—a resolute self-dramatist, playing the part of the director who had given up Hollywood and who was carrying the ashes of James Dean as a burden and a privilege.

Susan Ray assisted Nick through years of near-madness, through the agonies of failure and through prolonged bouts with cancer. She was tender to him, and loyal. But she was a smart woman who warned sympathizers to consider how far Ray was in a plight of his own making:

> Everywhere there were those who were ready to join him and stay on for life. They gave him their talismans, cash and time, but when the tide turned many found themselves beached while Nick passed by on a wave. No matter how short-lived the contact had been, the ones left behind seemed to grieve it.

NICHOLAS RAY

I wonder when that air of heroic pathos first attached itself to Ray. From Frank Lloyd Wright he went on to New York, and to the theater, where he became friendly with Alan Lomax, Elia Kazan and Jean Evans, who would later become his first wife. He also worked in radio during the war for the Office of War Information. (He was unfit for service because of rheumatoid arthritis and congenital heart malformation; in later years his doctors were amazed at the self-inflicted trials that he survived.) In these years he roamed all over America and became an expert on jazz and folk music. He went to Hollywood after the war to assist Kazan, and then he began to direct. His debut, produced by Houseman, was *They Live by Night* (1948), among the freshest and most moving first films ever made in America, in which young lovers in a rural setting are doomed by a life of crime, and by that dogged Ray conviction that luck and the world have turned against them.

Over the next fifteen years, Ray made several poor films, and few without flaw or injury. He was never an easy employee for the studios; his mix of personal self-destructiveness and dark vision marked him as dangerous. I don't doubt that he relished, and stirred, that reputation. Along the way he made several remarkable films such as no one else could have done: the nervy mood and the spatial dynamics were his alone, and they united the disparate genres of *In a Lonely Place* (1950), *On Dangerous Ground* (1951), *The Lusty Men* (1952), *Johnny Guitar* (1954), *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), *Bigger Than Life* (1956), *Bitter Victory* (1958), *Wind Across the Everglades* (1958) and even his last film, *55 Days at Peking* (1963). So many of the titles are themselves captions to Ray's frame of mind.

Eisenschitz is an admirable researcher of film production, as witness the problematic development of *Bigger Than Life*. He traces the dismay of actor-producer James Mason observing Ray and his assistant Gavin Lambert as they dismantled an existing script while enlisting the moonlight aid of Clifford Odets. Eisenschitz is also helpful in recovering the battleground behind *Bitter Victory* and *Wind Across the Everglades*. On the former, there were dire casting difficulties (Ray wanted Richard Burton and Montgomery Clift), as well as wars with producers. On the latter, Ray lost the faith of his writer, Budd Schulberg, fell ill, lost control of the picture and hovered somewhere between anarchic genius and incompetence.

And Eisenschitz skillfully describes the wondrous but stricken eloquence that Ray commanded. *I Was Interrupted* is a title to amuse many who tried to talk to Ray, for his greatest interrupter was his own silence. He would pause, groan, dwell deeper in the hole of doubt and . . . escape? He spoke not just slowly, but reluctantly; he was forever laboring after sense. (The transcripts of his sessions with students in *I Was Interrupted* are often tribute to the kids' patience and reverence.) Words were not Ray's medium—except when he was talking to actors. He saw scripts as things to inspire

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departure, and he was famous for the credo that the vital life of pictures is never in the script. "If it was all in the script—why shoot the film?" His pauses were earnest, yet they were also a calculated torment to people with whom he was reluctant to argue. As the years passed, they must have been made baroque by alcohol. But the struggle to find sense was great theater, attractive to many. It was also a trap of self-pity, for it allowed Ray to feel that he was always just within reach of wisdom.

But this biography stops short of the private life. This is all the sadder in that Ray's endless acting tended to make so much of that life public and raw. His films were ingeniously autobiographical; his choice of players needed to be based in personal harmony or excitement; he was always alluding to his own torments. Nowhere is this clearer than in *In a Lonely Place*, the story of a harsh, independent Hollywood screenwriter named Dixon Steele, who was played by Humphrey Bogart. Steele is a suspect in a murder case, in part for circumstantial reasons, but also because he has an air of murderous readiness. He escapes suspicion and finds some happiness when he meets Laurel Gray, played by Gloria Grahame. But that relationship cracks when Laurel discovers for herself just how much paranoia, violence and depression there is in Steele.

In a Lonely Place is a gripping film noir, a candid portrait of Hollywood instability, maybe the best thing that Bogart ever did, and a rueful study of the impossibility of lasting ties for a man like Steele, or Ray. Ray was married to Grahame; she was his second wife. Eisenschitz makes clear that the marriage was never secure. Ray was drinking and gambling heavily at the time. They were already separated when *In a Lonely Place* was shot. So there was a real-life flux of attraction and horror behind the film, a terrible edginess that helps explain the wounded sensibilities of Bogart and Grahame on screen.

Ray is quoted by Eisenschitz on why he married Grahame. The account is piercing, if not edifying:

> I was at the crap table when my best man Jay C. Flippen [a character actor] came to tell me it was time to go to the church on the grounds of the El Rancho Vegas. I think I wanted to be absolutely broke; I didn't want this dame, who proved to be as shrewd as she had threatened to be, to have anything of mine. I had lost a bundle. Now here we were, two people starting out fresh. The reason I went ahead with the marriage was because she was pregnant and I had promised I would marry her. A nice, Midwestern boy goes by the credo: my word is better than my bond. How little that means in this business.

Isn't there something deranged in that? Ray had a particular brand of self-destructiveness that masked his own weakness by blaming the system. The self-pity and the cruelty were in ruinous symbiosis; and so the tumult of behavior took on the weird rhetoric of honor. Eisenschitz's source notes are usually scrupulous, yet he doesn't tell us when or how Ray made this self-indictment. Still, it is a moment from life that illumines the twists in Ray's thinking. It also corroborates Houseman's startling and lofty judgment.

But the case of Gloria Grahame did not close there. She and Ray were divorced in 1952. She sought no alimony, only $300 a month child support for their son, Tim. So what did Ray mean by saying that Grahame would "have anything of mine"? By his first marriage to Jean Evans, Ray had had another son, Anthony, born in 1937; and in 1960, Anthony Ray and Gloria Grahame were married. Eisenschitz covers this event in one short line. He has nothing to add about its meaning, or about its shock for an artist who was obsessed with the themes of parental care and filial rebellion. It was not long after his son's marriage that Ray suffered his most significant breakdown and loss of faith.

In the '50s he had nearly known triumph and security; and he had been frightened by the proximity. *Johnny Guitar* was such a strange Western, a parody of Joan Crawford and itself garish in color and brilliant in design. The film is a drunken self-mockery that still finds time for uncanny scenes of regret and rekindling between old lovers, as well as a confrontation between Crawford and Mercedes McCambridge that is genuinely operatic. And *Rebel Without a Cause* was, of course, the key film of its decade: a high school world inhabited by 23-year-olds (the self-pity of delayed adolescence); a seminal study in the rift between generations, passionate in its identification with emotional outlaws, serenely flattering to the young, very sentimental; and the picture that established the iconography of James Dean. The living legend of the kid in the red wind jacket who is tough and gentle, a lost son but a rescuing father, came from *Rebel*, not from *East of Eden* or *Giant*. *Rebel Without a Cause* was also a box-office hit, an experience that affected Ray for the rest of his life.

What happened between Ray and Dean? Some noted that Dean was taking charge of the film, learning that he wanted to be a director himself and exploiting Ray's indulgent fondness. Susan Ray (who never met Dean) judged something else from the movie alone:

> I did not want to like *Rebel Without a Cause*—everyone liked *Rebel*, almost a contradiction in terms—but how had Nick known about the claustrophobia of suburban life and what it was like for someone like me growing up? And what was all the fuss about Dean when Dean was so clearly—to me anyway—aping Nick?

Eisenschitz, too, provides stunning evidence of this, though I am not sure he has noticed it. His biography has a picture of Ray in his early 20s, stretched out on a sofa, gazing at a bottle of milk on a chair. The resemblance to Dean's coiled languor twenty or so years later is eerie—and in *Rebel* Dean has an inspired sequence with a milk bottle. Whatever Ray's love for Dean, it was a fantasy rediscovery of self: the beautiful, fatalistic angel, less a rebel without a cause than the wisest guy in town. He is the outsider as leader and poet. Dean was a dream come to life for Ray, and *Rebel* would not be so heavy on love without that transference.

Then Dean died, the perfect capper for Ray's gloomy sense of destiny. Just when he might have become a major Hollywood director, Ray began edging away. *Bigger Than Life*, his last great American film, is a study in arrogance, in self-drama disdaining ordinary existence. It is a very frightening case study,

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lit up by James Mason's eager, hysterical performance as an overworked teacher whose manic-depressive nature is liberated by cortisone. Ray had the same perilous inclination—and the same reliance on drugs.

In the late '50s Ray went to Europe; nearly all his fans lived there. He became disabled by drink. Eisenschitz leaves no doubt that drink was the true swamp on *Wind Across the Everglades* (a broken treasure, and one of the first films to take nature as its subject). Then, as an exile from America, Ray made a huge and disastrous deal with the producer Samuel Bronston to make two epics in Spain: *King of Kings* and *55 Days in Peking*. He had never had so much money, or such opportunity to loathe himself for yielding to "corruption." He was hardly the man to make a life of Christ; and *55 Days* broke his health and inspired his boozing. Still, it has hushed and precise intimacies amid its swagger of action, and they show what Ray could do. He had a dream that it would be his last picture—and if he didn't have the dream, he adopted it thereafter as his curse, his message from fate.

He was only 52 in 1963. He had something like genius for putting scenes up on a big screen; and he could make magic conspiracies with actors. He might have soared in the '60s and '70s, the very moment in American history when his moody, stylish rebellion came into fashion. But he would not, or could not, talk up a deal, master a script or compromise with the shits. So he went away, in part, I think, because success terrified him. He had lost his nerve for the depleting managerial labor of making a film, especially without a studio for a home. Ray despised studios, but he needed their systems of support. He was lost without a base, lost without the provocation and the impetus of America.

There were woeful years in Europe. He ran a nightclub in Madrid. He lived on the island of Sylt, off the coasts of Germany and Denmark. Projects came and went. He sank into alcohol and drugs and a life of emotional damage. That's when he came back to America, to Chicago, in 1968, and found his last wife. The Chicago film was never finished. In the '70s he got a teaching job at SUNY Binghamton, and there he struggled to make a bizarre psychodrama with his students: *We Can't Go Home Again*. As a work-in-progress, it got a standing ovation at Cannes in 1973, but it was never completed or released, and its use of many formats makes it a challenge to ordinary projection.

There were plans, always; but Ray was in forbidding shape for financiers. His handsomeness turned satanic, and then into grand, wasted gauntness. His own appearance was his movie. He played the small role of an art forger in Wim Wenders's *The American Friend*, and then, as Ray faced cancer, the two men entered into a macabre collaboration—Nick's last movie, it was called, or *Lightning Over Water*. As Susan Ray says, the task of the filming was torture to Ray, yet the self-enactment prolonged his life. There is a chilling moment near the end when his ghastly, lovely face tells the camera, "Cut," and then, "Don't cut." It was the perfect Nick Ray paradox. *Lightning Over Water* is a difficult film to watch; we do not expect such common, unalleviated distress on screen, and there is no avoiding the sense of intrusion and exploitation. Yet Nick was determined to do it. He was dead, in July 1979, before the film was finished.

Nicholas Ray: An American Journey is a decent book, carefully researched. It does not risk the chaotic depths of Ray's life because the author prefers to guard his own hero worship. (There is a lot of that in French film writing.) I wanted more on Grahame. I don't quite trust the assertion that Ray's one-time Communist Party membership was hushed up because Howard Hughes liked him. The last ten years of Ray's life are tidied up in the way that morticians make corpses polite. It may be that only a novel could convey the man's willful agonies.

But I had hoped to settle at least the matter of the eye. At some point during the Chicago adventure, Ray had a mishap. This is what he said in an interview in 1977 (and it is all we get in Eisenschitz's book):

> I lost an eye. An embolism. At three o'clock in the morning I found out that we had no backing, sent my staff home and fell asleep at the editing table. I woke up and my eye was kind of heavy. It got worse. It took me six hours to find a doctor, and if I had made it twenty minutes sooner, they would have been able to inject nicotinic acid and save the eye.

"Christ!" gasped the original interviewers. Susan Ray appeared on the scene not long thereafter and noted that Ray's large private pharmacy included a stock of eye patches. She says he had lost his vision. But Elia Kazan believed the accident had occurred years before in a fight in Spain. Others saw the eye patch drift from one eye to the other, and toward the end of his life Ray gave it up altogether.

Places You'll Never Go

for Yehuda Mayer Dym

"Just once," he told himself in the summer of 1944
And he tiptoed out of his hiding place on a farm in Grenoble.

He was desperate for sound. Light itself had become a conversation,
Had grown round as bronze harps and trombones.

West hissed the shining birches.
East sang the glimmering flutes behind the trapdoors of leaves.

He was caught in a cafe, locked in a barn, the barn set on fire.
Now we say to his children, "Long enough. Let go of it,"

Snow falling gently on the silks of our futures.
But when they look at snow, they see the handkerchiefs of the dead,

Swan-colored fragments initialed by all he'll never say.
For a year or two, his daughter searched for him.

"Maybe he was put in a camp," she said. "And he has amnesia.
And he can't find his way home." No one could stop her.

"Maybe I'll see him on the avenue or in the park," she said.
"He'll look older and thin. I won't spot him easily.

But when I do, I'll move towards him with the greatest care,
Across these streets that he loved though he won't remember why."

VICKIE KARP

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The man I met in 1978 did not seem to have vision problems, and there are plenty of photographs in which his right eye is riveting enough to play the Ancient Mariner. I mention this only in a spirit of inquiry, unsatisfied by the biography, and because I think there was something in Ray that loved the appearance of affliction. Like many directors, he was carried along on the tragic momentum of his act. At his own end, he was so valiant and so determined to fight on that the power of acting seemed sufficient to save a life. *Lightning Over Water* shows a man whose final lonely place required a camera's presence to get him off life's stage.

The man I knew was so brave, and in such a perilous state, that it was hard to ask how he had got there. I remember more waiting an entire hour trying to get him to eat a couple of mouthfuls of scrambled egg. He had become the ultimate Ray character: damned, defiant and staggering toward his end. In London in the early '60s, there had been a critical debate on the virtues of personal, modest, everyday cinema as opposed to the compromised melodrama of Hollywood. "Ray or Ray?" asked *Sight & Sound*. Satyajit or Nicholas? There's no need to dispute the Indian director's achievement. But Nick Ray now *is* slipping away, so it is important to say that this self-made disaster gave us passages of intense, threatened movie life that wipe away Hollywood's enameled lies.

These books are not enough. Ray's own "writings" reveal his incoherence and pretensions as well as his talent. He was far more lucid on screen, in the hesitations, in the alarmed glances of characters, in the extraordinary way in which the characters battle for control of the screen's space and time. Yet it is no longer a simple matter to recommend Ray's films. There was never a director who had more need of large screens, fresh prints and emphatic darkness. Ray was a maker of cinema, and he loved CinemaScope, a format that is bastardized by television and even by the best letter-box screening. I am not sure that anyone can now see *Bigger Than Life* or *Bitter Victory* properly. Wide-screen prints are seldom shown; they are often lost or faded. Theaters are too small, and sometimes it seems that the very dark that sustained Ray has been given up. Maybe you had to be a teenager in his time to know this man's dangerous exhilaration.

DAVID THOMSON is the author most recently of *Showman: The Life of David O. Selznick* (Knopf).

TRB *continued from page 6*

at all. Outside auditors found the records a mess and $18,000 missing. I can't help feeling that if this were found at, say, the House Post Office, *The Wall Street Journal* would not repeatedly declare the investigation more heinous than the crime.

By July 14 ("FBI Director Rose?"), the *Journal* was casually referring to "the next time William Kennedy III asks the FBI to investigate some political enemy," though there was never any suggestion that the travel office was a political enemy or that the investigation was politically motivated. The theme of this editorial was that Reno had become merely "the ostensible attorney general" while real power lay with President Clinton's "legal cronies from Little Rock who are already placed at the heart of his administration." This, the *Journal* asserted, threatens "the prospects for apolitical justice."

During Waco, the editors noted with alarm, "Mr. Clinton spoke not with Ms. Reno but with his golfing pal, Webster Hubbell," the associate attorney general, another Rose alum. Thence to the usual list of Rose partners in the administration, a new list of friends of Hillary Clinton in the administration and the assertion that while "even a President (and First Lady) who used to denounce Ed Meese as a political crony of Ronald Reagan" is allowed to hire the people he wants, "cronyism is a lot more serious when it begins to involve criminal prosecution, and especially the FBI."

Of course no one ever tried to create a scandal over the mere fact that Ed Meese was a California buddy of Ronald Reagan's. (Why bother, when there was so much richer material?) Yet that is precisely what the *Journal* was trying to do about Hubbell, Foster, et al. And to see the defenders of Ed Meese asserting the alleged principle of an "apolitical" Justice Department is a special laugh. Likewise watching the former zealots of executive privilege trying to raise a fuss about whether the president consults the attorney general or the associate attorney general in a crisis.

"What's The Rush?" (July 19) complained that "the gang that pulled the great travel office caper is now hell-bent on firing the head of the FBI" and asked why the "hurry." Given that the exposure of abuses by William Sessions had come from the Bush administration, and that the Clinton people had been sitting on the case for six months, it might seem a little hard to argue ulterior motives and unseemly haste on the part of the Clintonites. But *The Wall Street Journal* was up to the job. "We do not want law enforcement put at the disposal of this or that political faction," the editors unctuously opined.

The editorial offered no evidence—or even a theory—of why the "Rose Law Firm" clique should be out to get Sessions unfairly. It merely noted that "if Mr. Sessions is fired it will of course be for ostensible cause, as the travel office firings were over expense records," and that "the conventional wisdom within the Washington Beltway has certainly run against him, for whatever reason." This is apparently all it takes to create a suspicion of conspiracy in *The Wall Street Journal* editors' minds.

And thence to the last (so far) editorial in the series, "A Washington Death" (July 22). Given the *Journal*'s routine use of the word "Washington" as an epithet, the title itself was tastelessly sneery. After a routine expression of sympathy for Vincent Foster's family and friends, and a defense of its past editorials on the grounds of the public's right to know, the *Journal* called for an independent "special counsel"—exactly the institution it had howled against so often during the Reagan-Bush years—to investigate Foster's death.

"We had our disagreements with Mr. Foster during his short term in Washington, but we do not think that in death he deserves to disappear into a cloud of mystery that we are somehow ordained never to understand.... If he was driven to take his life by purely personal despair, a serious investigation should share this conclusion so that he can be appropriately mourned."

What's most offensive about this paragraph, I think, is the notion that *The Wall Street Journal* wishes to do a favor for Vince Foster. Foster left no suicide note. If he wanted to dissipate the mystery surrounding his death, he could easily have done so. It's safe to assume he did not die counting on *The Wall Street Journal* to safeguard his memory. As for the phrase "appropriately mourned"—well, I'm afraid it defies comment.

Did the *Journal* editorials have anything to do with Foster's suicide? It's always possible that, being inexperienced in the ways of the Beltway Big Leagues, he took them more to heart than he should have. Even if so, *The Wall Street Journal* deserves no blame for his death. Public debate cannot be conducted on the assumption that public officials are overly sensitive. But the *Journal* and its editors can be blamed for trashy journalism. They tarred themselves without leaving a single real mark on Vincent Foster.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Potential risks

TOUT WASHINGTON SEEMS FLABbergasted at the notion that Dan Rostenkowski, a.k.a. "Congressman A," may have had more than a philatelist's interest in the House Post Office. Why would he stoop to pilfer $21,000, muse the locals, when he could have walked away with a legal million by retiring and converting grandfathered campaign funds into personal ones? Twenty-one thousand dollars, those of us from Chicago answer, is what we found out about *last week.* Of course Rosty deserves his day in court, etc., etc. But I for one will be surprised if this turns out to be a bum rap, though I'll miss him when he's gone. Rosty is one of the last survivors of the old Daley machine, which in its heyday was lubricated by all the familiar forms of political vice, from bribery and vote fraud to bid-rigging and ghost hiring. Maneuvering within it were essentially two types of politicians—those on the take, and those who turned a blind eye to those on the take. Daley himself fit into the latter category. As Mike Royko wrote in *Boss,* the mayor's moral code was: "Thou shalt not steal, but thou shalt not blow the whistle on anybody who does." But there has never been any reason to believe Rosty, once a Daley lieutenant, followed the mayor's example. Those who have assisted him in making big money in Congress, like Dan Shannon, the manager of his so-called blind trust (which appreciated more than 2,500 percent in two years), have been rewarded with surreptitious fixes in tax legislation worth millions of dollars. And as Phil Kuntz documented in an engrossing story in *Congressional Quarterly,* Rostenkowski manages to spend one day out of every four golfing at someone else's expense. The same goes for the tabs from his sirloin-and-martini orgies at his favorite haunt, Morton's in Georgetown. It may be a lobbyist footing the bill. It may be his campaign fund. It may be his PAC. But you can bet it's not Rosty himself. Until recently, rent for his Chicago congressional office went to his two sisters (who owned the building in secret). Rent for his campaign office (which he owns) went to himself. So the apparent pettiness of Rosty's apparent corruption should not surprise us. You can take the ward boss out of Chicago, but you can't take Chicago out of the ward boss.

THE OTHER CURRENT SCANDAL that one is obliged to be shocked by is the Joe McGinniss/Simon and Schuster affair. To review, McGinniss has now been convincingly charged with both fictional invention and plagiarism in his new book about Teddy Kennedy. To carry off these seemingly contradictory literary sins in the same volume is a rare feat. But McGinniss has done it with aplomb. He and his publisher have issued contradictory statements every fifteen minutes—the author invented dialogue, he didn't invent dialogue, McGinniss didn't plagiarize William Manchester, well Manchester plagiarized too, and so on. Now, rather than recalling the book or re-examining whether it deserves to be published, S&S is rushing copies to bookstores, crying all the way to the bank as the "controversy" generates sales. ("Everyone's Talking About It. No One Has Read It. It's in Bookstores Today. You Decide," says the ad in *The New York Times.*) Pretty shameless, isn't it? I only point out that the firm in question has not lost a great deal of sleep over past challenges to its high editorial and ethical standards, such as Kitty Kelley's book about Nancy Reagan. There is, however, one more sin to add to the list. In *The Kennedy Imprisonment,* Garry Wills devastated not just Teddy but the entire clan in 310 pages. In *The Last Brother,* McGinniss takes 626 pages to miss his wide target completely.

THE RISE OF DAVID GERGEN HAS tended to eclipse Washington's other party-switching spin-meisters. But never fear, Bob Strauss is alive and well. Connoisseurs of his self-aggrandizing leakery had a treat the other day in Jack Anderson's column titled "Dinner at Duke's." Weeks after the forgettable event, which brought the Clintons and Bob Dole together for a high-calorie summit meeting at Duke Zeibert's, a Washington eatery specializing in third-party-payer cuisine, Anderson devoted an entire column to Strauss's version of the evening. The story begins with a phone call. "'I understand that you're a good friend of Bob Dole's,' Clinton inquired." (MESSAGE: Bob Strauss runs this town.) "Strauss later told friends that Clinton's statement was a sign of poor staff work: someone should have known about his friendship with Dole and sought him out earlier." (MESSAGE: These jokers took their sweet time finding out who runs this town.) Clinton arrives half an hour late to dinner, but Strauss saves the day by telling a story "about the last time he tried making peace between a president and Congress. He invited Jimmy Carter, House Speaker Tip O'Neill and Senator Robert Byrd out to dinner." (MESSAGE: Bob Strauss has always run this town.) Anderson's column concludes, "By the time the dishes had been cleared, a mutual friend remarked that the dinner had improved both men's chances for 1996." (MESSAGE: Doesn't matter who the president is, Bob Strauss will still run this town.)

ON THE SUBJECT OF MEDIA MANIpulation, a recent series by Richard Whittle in the *Dallas Morning News* demonstrates Phil Gramm of Texas to be the Senate's foremost practitioner of that dark art. Memos and a guide to "non-speech media events" prepared for Gramm's 1990 reelection campaign offer a rare glimpse into the politician in action. "Typically, you will want to begin an event with a briefing in a conference room setting that lasts for approximately ten to twenty minutes. The purpose of the briefing is to help establish credibility with the media," the guide explains. For the same reason, there should be at least a dozen people around the table, even if only three are needed. If the electronic media is present, it's dangerous to take questions from the audience, and reporters may attempt to "pin down" the senator's position on a controversial issue. But while nothing should be left to chance, "We never wish to separate the senator from the press." The series also explains the technique known as "Grammstanding." It means claiming credit for something you voted against. To take only one example, when Gramm visited Southwest Texas State University, he "announced" a $1.2 million federal grant for drug abuse prevention. But the staff memo about the event warned (under the heading POTENTIAL RISKS): "The senator did vote against the appropriations bill providing funds for this grant." Later in the campaign, Gramm visited the Brooke Army Medical Center outside San Antonio, which he had been privately assured by the Pentagon was safe from the budget ax. That wasn't his message to the locals, however. According to another memo: "We have tried to create a 'BAMC funding scare' while feeling comfortable that BAMC is safe from the budget knife." The senator's defense? Typographical error: the memo dropped a crucial "not."

JACOB WEISBERG

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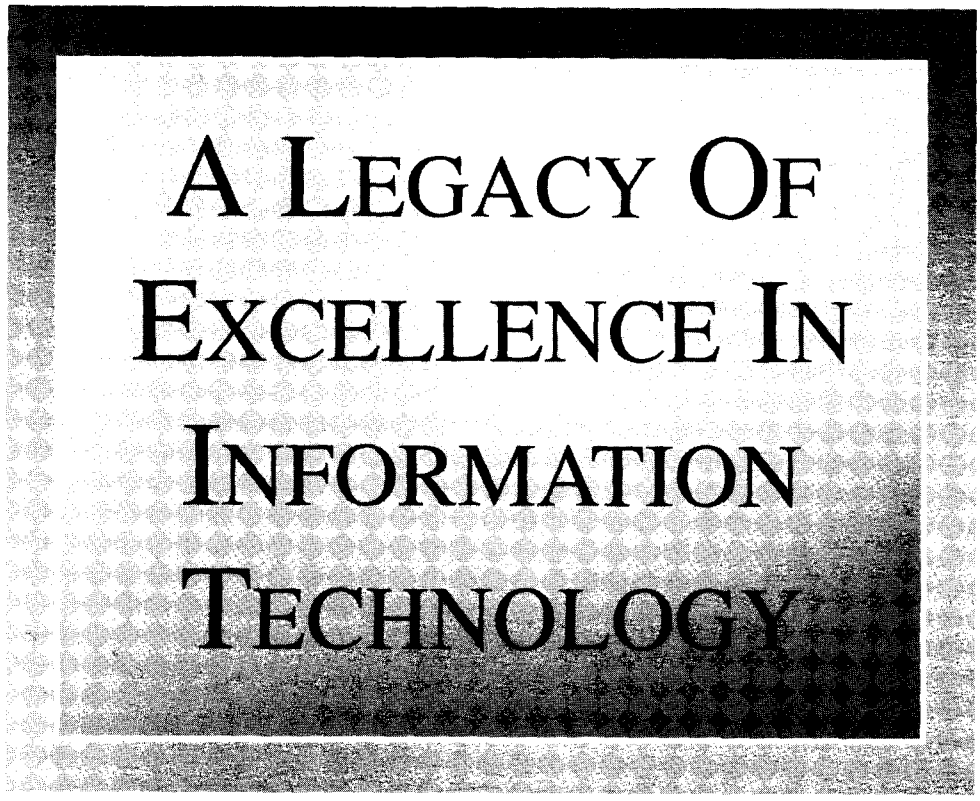

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